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GROUPE MALOFILM
1207 rue Saint-André, 4e étage Montréal, Québec H2L 3S8
Tél.: 514 / 844-4555 Fax: 514 / 844-1471 Tlx: 055-61301

IMAGE ORGANIZATION
9000 Sunset Blvd., Suite 915 L.A. 90069 California
Tél.: 213 / 278-8751 Fax: 213 / 278-3967 Tlx: 691021 IMORG

Editor
Ross Welford

Deputy Editor
Susan Eardley

Sales Executive
Lydia Fairfield

Publications Co-ordinator
Vanessa Collu

Circulation Controller
David Jones

Group Classified Manager
Jonathan Hallett

Production
David Miller

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Martin Jackson

Assistant Publisher
Eileen Dignan

Publishing Director
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7 Swallow Place,
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Telephone: 01-491 9484
Telex: 29973 ITP LNG
Fax: 01-355 3176
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Canada toll-free number:
1 800 363 4129

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Telephone: 03-746 0848
Fax: 03-746 0847

TV WORLD

International business magazine for televison and video

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THE EDITOR'S LETTER

The Yugoslavian government is considering new ways of operating a third channel to supplement the two-channel system presently operating. Something, certainly, must be done . . . but what?

The current system is expensive: Yugoslavs pay nearly 5 per cent of their wages to receive JRT. It is also unweildy: the first channel is a basic service from eight centres; the second channel is a combination of different JRT and imported programmes. The third channel is established only experimentally in cities such as Belgrade, showing Super Channel, MTV, CNN, old JRT repeats and some programmes from the Berlusconi – controlled TV Capodistria, via cable.

It is cable that should drive a restructuring of Yugoslav broadcasting – it is already a dynamic force for investment in a stagnating economy. Private cable companies will be financially strong enough to establish local third channels not only on cable, but to the wider TV audience. Limited foreign investment would encourage this, though that is a question of a much deeper ideology than the current government would care to contemplate.

The best solution would be the ownership of the first, national channel by JRT, the second channel becoming the regional broadcaster, and the third being owned and operated on a local level by the cable companies. It is a proposal that is now before the government, and is one that should be given serious consideration.

■ This month's special feature on the Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc countries is the most thorough we have ever undertaken. It is fitting that we should be taking a close look at this area at a time when so much is happening that is encouraging not only to residents of countries such as Poland, but to western countries too.

Some countries have long histories of dealing with the west: Czechoslovakia, for example, has a huge list of co-productions that it is involved with; Hungary too, and Poland. These co-productions have, however, nearly always taken the form of facilities-type deals, with western producers taking a condescending "yes, but they're ever so cheap" attitude to their Eastern Bloc partners.

Will this ever change? It has to, but it can only change so long as the Eastern Bloc continues to. The reforms begun in Poland, and in Hungary, and in the Soviet Union – all linked inextricably with the new approach to government marked by Mr Gorbachev's rule in the USSR – must be encouraged and continued, and allowed to affect those countries' governments which so far have shown scant enthusiasm for ever adapting, notably East Germany and Romania.

The television revolution, as suggested by our cover design this month, is an important part of these countries' development. The west has an important part to play.

Ross Wegood

■ NEWS BRIEFS

■ Commercial satellite TV channels in Europe account for 20 per cent of the total viewing time in households able to receive according to the results of the Pan European Audience Research (PETAR) organisation's latest survey. On average, cable-connected viewers spend three hours and 22 minutes each week watching commercial satellite TV.

■ Public TV International will be launched at Monte Carlo 1990 to market US PBS TV programming world wide.

■ The satellite that will carry British Satellite Broadcasting's (BSB) five TV channels was launched from Cape Canaveral, Florida last month. BSB plans to begin its services in the first half of 1990.

■ West Germany has launched its new direct broadcasting satellite TV-Sat 2. It is Germany's first satellite to broadcast in The D2MAC standard and will carry five channels. 1Plus, 3SAT, Sat 1 and RTL Plus have all taken transponders while the fifth channel has yet to be allocated.

■ New Zealand's TV3 will float shares next month in the run-up to its November launch as the country's first commercial television network. TV3 is to change its share structure in preparation for the flotation. The US network NBC will hold 15 per cent of the shares.

■ The Greek government has awarded licences for two commercial networks, ending its state monopoly on television. The stations are Teletypos and Antenna-TV. Both intend to start broadcasting before the end of the year.

■ Marcel Vinay, President of Protele, the international distribution arm of Mexico's Televisa will visit China as a guest of the Chinese Ministry of Cinema, Radio and Television.

Protele has sold over 450 hours of programming to China and its novelas *Bianca Vidal* and *The Rich Also Cry* have scored the top ratings on Chinese TV.

■ CNN has extended its service with the signing of a five-year contract with Intersputnik, the Soviet satellite agency, which will transmit CNN International via satellite to the Indian Sub-continent, Africa and Southeast Asia. CNN's reach is now virtually worldwide.

■ Management Company Entertainment Group, Inc. has completed its purchase of Virgin Vision Limited, the independent international distributor of filmed entertainment from London-based Virgin Group Limited. M.C.E.G. now has annual revenues exceeding US$150 million and more than 1,600 films in its library.

■ Group W Productions' president Derk Zimmerman and Simone Harari, Chairman of Paris-based TeleImages (above) have joined wih Havas, the French media organisation, to form FuturImages. The company will create made-for-TV movies and mini-series.

ERRATA: We have been asked by Ufa Film of Germany to clarify the following points raised in *TV World* June/July 1989:

"RTL-Plus nowadays reaches more than 52 per cent of all West German TV households either via cable or over the air.

Ufa-Bertelsmann holds a 38.9 per cent stake in RTL Plus."

Ufa also states that ARD and ZDF were offered a daily one-hour summary of Wimbledon coverage as well as radio rights, in addition to the short segments that we reported. We are pleased to set the record straight.

We are pleased also to restore the correct name to CTW's director of international production. She is, of course, Joan Lufrano and not Lufkano (TV World, August '89).

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Spanish snub to Murdoch

MADRID: Last month's announcement of the private TV franchises to be awarded in Spain included the group headed by Italy's Silvio Berlusconi, but Rupert Murdoch will not be operating a channel as he hoped.

The three private channels authorised will be operated by:

■ Gestevision Telecino, headed by Berlusconi's Fininvest company and the Spanish publishing house Anaya, each with the maximum permitted stake of 25 per cent.

■ Sociedad de Television Canal Plus Espana, led by the French pay-TV operation Canal Plus and Promotora de Informaciones SA, publisher of the daily newspaper El Pais; each, again, with 25 per cent;

■ Antena 3 de Television, which groups together the newspaper *La Vanguardia*, the radio station Antena 3 and various other newspapers and foreign financiers.

Univision Canal Uno, the bid by Murdoch, the publishing group Zeta and the Spanish group Canal C, failed.

The announcement was made on August 25 after a meeting of Spain's cabinet. A government spokeswoman said the decision had taken into account the guarantees offered by the companies to "safeguard the plurality of ideas ad opinions." It is believed that the conservative tendencies of some of Murdoch's newspaper interests lost him favour with Spain's socialist government.

The three new channels will commence broadcasting early next year, at first in Madrid and Barcelona and later in the rest of Spain. They are in addition to the two existing state-run channels and three regional channels operated under local government licence.

Muppets go to Disney in US$100m transfer

LOS ANGELES: In a deal believed to be worth more than US$100 million the Walt Disney Company is to buy Jim Henson Associates, it was announced in Florida last month.

Under the agreement, Disney will acquire Henson's entire film and TV library, which includes *The Muppet Show*, *Fraggle Rock*, *The Muppet Babies* and the Muppet movies. The two companies also entered into a 15-year exclusive production agreement.

Henson is to produce films and TV programmes for the Disney Channel and Disney video labels, as well as cooperating with Disney's amusement parks for the use of Muppet characters. Work has already begun on a project for Disney World in Florida: a three-dimensional Muppet movie.

The Muppet Show was created by Jim Henson in 1976, a development of characters he created for the long-running *Sesame Street*. Jim Henson Associates has 120 employees in the US and around 35 in the UK.

The future for the Henson sales force, operating as Henson International Television out of London, was unclear as *TV World* went to press. It is understood that HIT's chief executive, Peter Orton, will be leaving to start up his own distribution business, and that HIT itself will be amalgamated into the Disney operation.

A source at Henson commented, "They are interviewing very selectively for the sales force. There will be redundancies for sure."

Two channels, one head

PARIS: Philippe Guilhaume, has been chosen by the Conseil Superieur De L'Audiovisuel as the Super-President of France's two public TV channels, Antenne 2 and FR3.

In selecting Guilhaume, at present the head of the Societe Francaise de Production (SFP), the CSA is presumably attempting to send a message to both the French Presidency and the country's media that in the future it would not automatically be making decisions – as had been charged until now – favourable to the (socialist) powers that be.

Although Guilhaume, a Gaullist, was himself a political appointee to the presdiency of SFP, his appointment to the joint presidency of Antenne 2 and FR3 was welcomed by the French television community, and especially by Prime Minister Michel Rocard who immediately unblocked a supplementary appropriation of 800 million francs (US$124.8 million) for his 1990 budget.

At SFP, where he arrived in January 1988, Guilhaume has won a reputation as a respected manager and a shrewd negotiator with institution's trades unions. In his new post, Guilhaume will have three years to improve the ratings of the country's public networks which have fallen considerably since the privatisation of TF1 in 1986, and the creation, earlier, of three privately-owned channels: Canal-Plus, La Cinq and M6.

At Antenne 2, Guilhaume must come to grips with a growing budget deficit. The channel was in the red by around 100 million francs (US$15 million) in 1988 alone.

Among his first declarations, Guilhaume has promised that he will not revert to the age-old practice of putting political considerations first in the running of the country's public networks. In the next few weeks, he is expected to appoint the new directors of Antenne 2 and FR3.

Format danger

LONDON: Many programme formats are no longer protected within the Commonwealth, thanks to last month's ruling by the privy council.

It decreed that the Broadcasting Corporation of New Zealand had not been in breach of copyright when it produced a programme which resembled *Opportunity Knocks*, a British talent show which was a hit in the 1970s for its presenter and owner Hughie Green.

Green took the matter to the High Court of New Zealand in 1979, but after the matter was dismissed, Green appealed to the privy council, the highest court in the Commonwealth.

The council ruled that, as Green could nct supply tangible scripts for *Opportunity Knocks*, the programme was no more than a "general idea or concept" and could not be the subject of copyright.

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NEWS DEALS

This regular department of TV World provides a round-up of recent programming deals and agreements.

☐ **WOT MUSIC** of the UK has sold 13 half-hours of programming to **Central Independent Television**. The series, *One to One* is hosted by Annie Nightingale and features interviews with music business personalities. The producer of the series is Jackie Thomas and George Pavlou is the director.

☐ **TV New Zealand International** has appointed **Devillier-Donegan Enterrises** to represent it exclusively in the United States.

☐ **CBC Enterprises** has sold 66 half-hour episodes of *Fred Penner's Place,* to **Nickelodeon,** the national, US cable service that specialises in children's television. Fred Penner is a children's entertainer who writes many of the songs on the show which combines contemporary music and classic children's songs with stories, rhymes and word games.

☐ **New World International** and **RCA/Columbia Pictures Home Video** have concluded an agreement for the licensing of 15 New World feature films for home video release in the UK. Among the pictures licensed are *Revenge,* a co-production between New World Entertainment and Columbia Pictures and starring Kevin Costner; *The Punisher* starring Dolph Lundgren and Lou Gossett Jr and *Hellbound: Hellraiser II,* which went on UK theatrical release on June 16.

☐ **M D Wax/Courier Films** has acquired the rights to a *Hungarian Fairy Tale* for Australia and New Zealand. The film is a Hungarofilm release and was directed by Gyula Gazdag. The acquisition covers all rights in Australia and New Zealand (exclusive of Australian Television) and including home video, theatrical, non theatrical, TV and cable.

☐ **Harmony Gold** will release and distribute worldwide *The Adventures on Rainbow Pond,* 39 animated half-hours available from January 1990. Harmony Gold has all rights, including television, home video and merchandising.

The Adventures on Rainbow Pond follow the adventures of two frogs, Jonathon Jumper and Hillary Hopper. Jonathon comes from a poor family in the woodland Rainbow Pond community but his best friend Hillary is the daughter of the pond's rich ruler.

☐ **Telso International** has sold *Murderers Among Us: The Simon Wiesenthal Story* to five new territories: Denmark's Denmarks Radio; Finland's YLE 2; Israel's Broadcasting Company; Belgian's VTM and Sweden's SVT International. The mini series is a **Citadel Entertainment Presentation** of a **TVS Films** production in association with **HBO** and **Hungarian Televison**.

"The Heroes"

The Heroes, produced for **TVS Films** and Australia's **10 TV**, has been sold for video rights to Portugal, Greece, Taiwan and Spain as well as new televison sales to Iceland's **Channel 2**, New Zealand's **TVNZ** and **VTM** for Belgian cale. *The Heroes,* stars British actor Paul Rhys and Australia's Jason Donovan and is based on a real life incident that occurred during World War II.

☐ **Hoffman/Israel Productions** has signed an exclusive television output deal with **Saban Entertainment** that gives Saban worldwide distribution rights to all television movies and mini-series produced by Hoffman/Israel.

The first project under the distribution agreement is also the first project produced by the new entity – the two-hour television movie comedy for NBC *Home by Midnight.*

☐ **Alliance Communications, Inc.,** an entertainment consortium, has been formed by eight US independent television production companies: The Avnet/Kerner Company; Robert Greenwald Productions; Leonard Hill Films; Michael Jaffe/Spectacor Films; The Konigsberg/Sanitsky Company; The Steve Tisch Company; von Zerneck-Sertner Films; and Steve White Productions.

ACT's initial venture is the establishment of a worldwide distribution operation to handle the product from its principals as well as programming acquired from other independents.

☐ **Action Time** the UK company specialising in game shows has sold the American show called *Blackout* to Antenne 2 in France and Bayereischer Rundfunk in Germany.

Antenne 2 will screen its 100 episodes in Autumn, and Bayereischer Rundfunk has just bought the rights for another 12 shows on top of its present series of five.

PEOPLE

■ Nick Witkowski, has been appointed as a consultant to **SelecTV** with a brief to set up **SelecTV** Group worldwide. Production companies within the SelecTV Group at present include: **Witzend Productions, Alomo Productions** and **Clement LaFrenais Productions.** Witkowski comes from Telso International where he was head of international sales and marketing.

■ Thomas E Palmieri has joined **Saban Entertainment** as President. He takes on the responsibilities for the company's business activities as well as the general operations for the parent company, its divisions, international offices and subsidiaries. Palmieri joins Saban from MTM Enterprises.

■ **Television New Zealand** has appointed Rosemary Krupa to open a London-based office for TVNZ International. Ms Krupa joins the company from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC).

■ Sir Brian Bailey has been appointed deputy chairman of the **Channel 4** board by the Independent Broadcasting Authority in the UK. He fills the vacancy left by George Russell who resigned as deputy chairman when he was appointed Chairman of the IBA.

John McGrath, an independent producer based in Scotland, has also been appointed a Member of the Channel 4 Board. He replaces James Gatward.

■ Ron Haynes has joined **Television New Zealand** as consultant head of programming. He comes from Channel Nine in Australia and will return to his executive role with the Nine Network at the end of his TVNZ contract.

■ **Orion Pictures International** has appointed Richard Plaatsman as vice president of international operations. Mr Plaatsman will be based at Orion's New York offices and will report directly to Robert Meyers, president.

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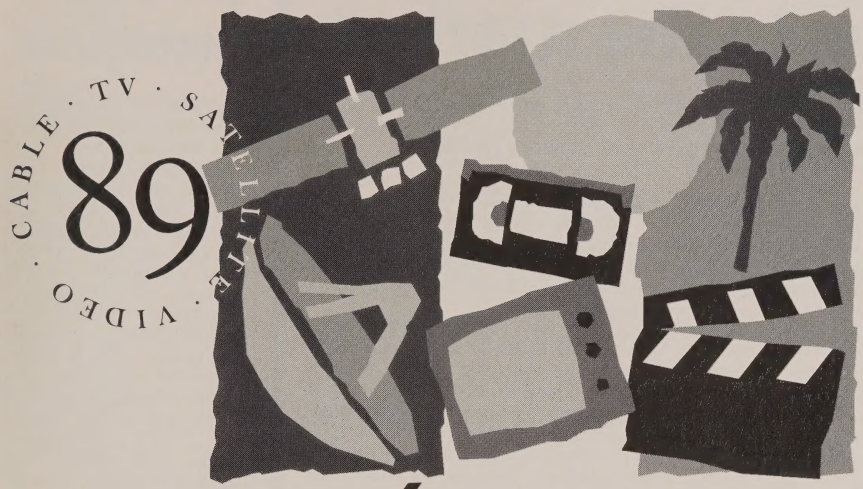

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EUROVIEW

Bringing Europe's indies to the market

In the first of *TV World's* Euroview articles, Jean-Louis Erneux reports from Brussels on the future of Euro Aim – now one year old

THIS MONTH media executives will meet in Paris for the French-European Assises de L'Audiovisuel – President Mitterand's initiative for a media equivalent of the European Commission's technology project, Eureka.

Rudi Barnet, head of the European Commission's Media 92 project, Euro Aim, has been asked by the event's organisers, The French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to write a draft paper, giving his proposals for the further development of Euro Aim – an umbrella organisation for independent European producers.

So far the project has been a success, giving support and assistance to independent producers in the sale of their programmes. Producers who took advantage of the Euro Aim initiative at Mipcom '88 and MIP TV '89 are reported to have sold 1,000 hours of programming making a turnover of around 7 million ECUs (European Currency Units – roughly equal to the US dollar). At this year's Mipcom in October the Euro Aim presence will be even greater giving even more independents the opportunity to bring their product to the marketplace.

Growing pains

Yet Euro Aim's reach is limited, since to be efficient it must keep reasonable proportions, believes Barnet. "During the market, there are experts available to assist the producers in every aspect of their negotiations with buyers. But these experts are unfortunately limited in number. So to guarantee this help to members, expansion cannot continue without check".

Euro Aim has also to find a way of dealing with those producers who are ready to fly the nest but are still considered too small to hold a regular stand at the major international markets.

It is this problem of growth that led Barnet and his colleagues to create further schemes, still with the objective of assisting independent producers in selling their programmes.

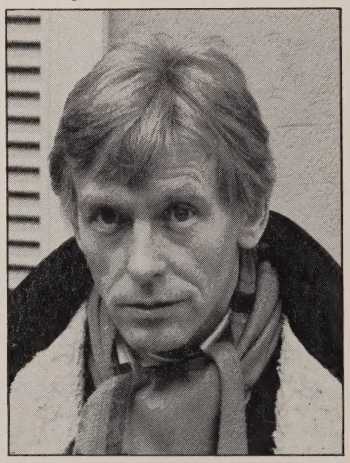
Mediabase is one such scheme. It is an electronic database that keeps track of around 3,500 current productions. This database is available at markets and will, at some stage be accessible via a data network.

Euro Aim believes that the difficulties of overcrowding under the Euro Aim umbrella could be relieved by working more with festivals and markets intended for specific programme genres.

At the San Sebastian Film Festival (September 18-21) TV programmes will be screened for the first time – a project organised by Euro Aim for the benefit of independent producers of feature length films. One hundred buyers from the major TV stations in Europe, the US and Australia are expected to attend. At the Cannes events, mini-series and shorts sell best because buyers don't have the time to devote to looking at the longer, high-quality product from some of Euro Aim's members.

In the same way the Festival of Munich is interested in developing a specialist forum for youth and education programmes and another project focuses on co-production with a meeting planned in Valencia in association with the Spanish Film Institute.

Of course the drawback is that many producers have a variety of material in their portfolios and consequently could find themselves spending too much time and money attending markets. . . □



Barnet: keeping the initiative.

Thames in bid for US producer/distributor

LONDON: As *TV World* went to press (August 30) the outcome was expected soon of Thames TV's US$100 million bid to buy up Reeves Communications Corp. of the US. All the signs were that the deal would go ahead in one form or another.

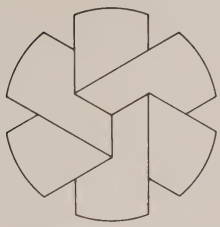
As a production company, Reeves is well established with the US networks – particularly in the field of situation comedies (for example, *Kate & Allie*), a genre for which Thames – Britain's largest ITV company – is best-known overseas (*Benny Hill* was Thames's biggest-earner before being dropped earlier this year.)

The proposed deal comes after other UK companies have been actively pursuing US interests, most notably the buyout earlier this year by TVS of MTM Productions. A year ago, Thames added to its international catalogue with the purchase of Tyburn Productions.

US sitcom "Kate & Allie".

In the US, Reeves does not distribute its own programmes – they are handled by Columbia and MCA. So Thames's long-standing relationship with D.L. Taffner – responsible for the successful and lucrative formatting of Thames's sitcoms some years ago – seems likely to continue.

THE FIRST



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USSR

How Leningrad's TV affects the whole

LENINGRAD is at the forefront of innovative television programming in the Soviet Union. The city's three channels which reach a potential audience of more than 15 million over the north and northwest of the Soviet Union, have a high proportion of live television programmes which appear to be delighting viewers and pushing the limits of glasnost (openness) even further.

One of the most popular – and shortest – programmes shown is *600 seconds*. The programme's host, Alexander Nevzorov, spends most of his time rushing around Leningrad following fire engines, ambulances and other local events. At first the television bus had problems getting through militia checks, but now, the bus is waved through and has become a familiar sight to Leningraders.

First shown in June 1987, the programme began as an experiment but quickly became a permanent addition to regular viewing because of audience support.

About 30 per cent of all programmes shown on Leningrad television are live, but this also includes sports programmes, such as ice hockey matches, symphony concerts and study programmes. Most of the popular live shows focus on current topics where the public is encouraged to participate. Among some of the most popular are *Public Opinion* which lets people talk about themselves. It goes out for three hours at peak-viewing time with a break for the news programme, *Vremya*. About 10 per cent of viewers take a direct part in the programme, often talking on the street, over the telephone or at the television's computer centre.

Another programme, *Fifth Wheel*, is shown twice a week and has been noted for its rough finish. It deals with particularly controversial subjects and comes in for criticism from many for going over the top. *Fifth Wheel* gave a rostrum to Andrei Sakharov.

Time Of Answer – Today focuses on specific problems in Leningrad and viewers 'phone-in with (sometimes very pointed) questions for which answers are expected. *Telecourier's* "social ambulance" attracts donations from viewers and is sometimes awaited with more impatience than real ambulances.

Although most Leningraders are pleased with the television offerings, there is some criticism. Boris Firsov, head of Leningrad TV from 1962-66 when he fell foul of Communist party authorities for his liberal programmes, thinks improvements could be made today. "I realise that many of them (Leningrad TV employees) are walking on a razor edge. But . . . I think the *Fifth Wheel* is getting too much out of its own leftishness. It shows a phenomenon but doesn't analyse it. The same can be said about *Telecourier*. *Public Opinion* is unpredictable. There is no guarantee that you are watching the main news. It has something of a no choice aspect to it."

The expectations of viewers, as well as the limits imposed not only by the authorities but by self-censorhip of programme-makers, are continually changing the face of Soviet television. Leningrad's pioneering efforts are expected to continue. □

FRANCE

Bringing culture back down to earth

PARIS: With some 1 billion francs (US$153 million) already invested in such prestigious productions as a four-part series on Vincent Van Gogh by Robert Altman, and more personal works by Ingmar Bergman and Eric Rohmer, France's La Sept has the potential to become an extraordinary supplier of highbrow cultural programming. The channel is fully subsidised by the French state and does need not depend, as most national networks, on an often unpredictable advertising market.

But, La Sept's main problem is not an ordinary one, either. In spite of a supply of programming that is the envy of France's other channels, La Sept (which stands for Societe Européenne de Programmes de Television) is hardly watched by anybody these days.

During the past two years the cultural channel had been able to ride piggy-back on France's other culturally-oriented network, FR3, where it had managed to attract a fairly important public following, but since last May 31 La Sept has had to go it alone and broadcast on a channel belonging to France's controversial TDF-1 satellite.

The problem is that very few people in France are able to tune in to TDF-1: the appropriate reception equipment – when and if it is available – would cost some US$3,000. In addition, to receive TDF-1's programmes on cable depends on access to a system which, for the moment, reaches only 150,000 French households. As a result, La Sept has at most only between 10,000 and 20,000 viewers, at a given moment.

Jerôme Clement, President du Directoire of the channel had to admit with embarrassment, a few days after broadcasting had begun on TDF-1, that he himself was unable to watch La Sept for he'd not yet found somebody willing to install the appropriate reception equipment.

Clement's first reaction was to fire off a letter to the Conseil Superieur de L'Audiovisuel (CSA) asking that La Sept be accorded a traditional hertzian frequency.

When in an interview with the French newspaper Le Monde he put the blame on the French electronics industry for not having foreseen the need for the necessary antennas and decoders, an industry spokesman shot back in inimitable French style that La Sept should consider itself lucky to have the few viewers it did have, for without the industry's "rapid action," it could have had no viewers at all.

As for the future, the French electronics manufacturer Thomson for one had to admit that it was not very likely to continue making the D2 Mac receiver it was producing at a rate of 5000 per month, since, at US$2000 per set, only 1000 were being sold every month.

As for Mr Clement, he is still awaiting a reply to his request to the CSA, and as matters stood at the end of August it appeared that La Sept would probably return to the late evening niche it had occupied very successfully until last May on FR3. □

Next month in TV World:

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IN PRODUCTION

■ **Send details of programmes in, or approaching production to TV World, 7 Swallow Place, London, W1R 7AA, UK.**

■ *When Love Dies,* a **Picture Palace** production for **Channel 4** in the UK began principal photography last month.

The drama tells the story of a young man's attempt to come to terms with the anguish caused by his wife's suicide. The programme examines the relationships between parents and children, between husbands and wives – between families.

When Love Dies is produced by Malcolm Craddoch who worked primarily as a director of comercials and documentaries before forming Picture Palace Productions Ltd. in 1970. The play will be shot entirely on location in North London.

■ Shooting started last month for a filmed drama series, *Perfect Scoundrels* for the ITV company **TVS**. The six stories, each an hour long, are about two modern-day confidence tricksters – Guy Buchanan and Harry Cassidy – who although officially on the 'wrong side of the law', have a higher code of moral value and behaviour than the people they con.

The series will be produced by Tim Aspinall. The directors are Ian Toynton and Barry Davis and the executive producer is Graham Benson (TVS Controller of Drama). The series will be screened on the ITV network next year.

■ Production started last month on the telefilm *Montana*. Gena Rowlands and Richard Crenna are to play the lead roles in the two-hour film, an **HBO** presentation of a Roger Gimbel production for **Turner Network Television**. It will be produced by Roger Gimbel and Fred Roos and directed by William A. Graham.

■ **Turner Network Television** (TNT) has formed an agreement with **Citadel Entertainment to produce** *Max and Helen: a Remarkable True Love Story* based on the book of the same name by writer and famed nazi-hunter Simon Wiesenthal. Treat Williams and Alice Krige star as the title characters, and Martin Landau plays Wiesenthal. The story is executive produced by David R. Ginsburg; produced by Steve McGlothen; directed by Phillip Saville and adapted for television by Corey Blechman. The two-hour film tells the tale of lovers separated by World War II and its aftermath and of their reunion some 20 years later. The production has begun on location in Budapest.

■ Poland and the UK's **BBC** are to co-produce a feature film – the first co-production between the two companies.

It will be filmed in Polish and subtitled in English for the BBC's *Screen Two* slot.

The story is based on the true experiences of a Pole who ran a Jewish orphanage in Warsaw in wartime Poland.

The BBC is understood to have invested £120,000 (US$90,000) in the project. The remaining £1.5 million (US$2.3 million) cost will be met by Polski Films and West Germany's Regina Zeigler Films.

■ **TV Australia** has commissioned **Grundy Television** to produce five half-hour episodes per week of a new drama serial, *City Hospital* from the creators of *Neighbours*.

UNICEF PRESENTS

a day in the life of a child

The Netherlands National Committee for UNICEF has developed this interesting television project for the period '89/'90 when the Convention of the Rights of the Child will be much in focus in the United Nations family. The project has been enthusiastically endorsed by UNICEF International and television stations in eight different countries have joined to make each a documentary concentrating on the daily life of a child in the Third World.

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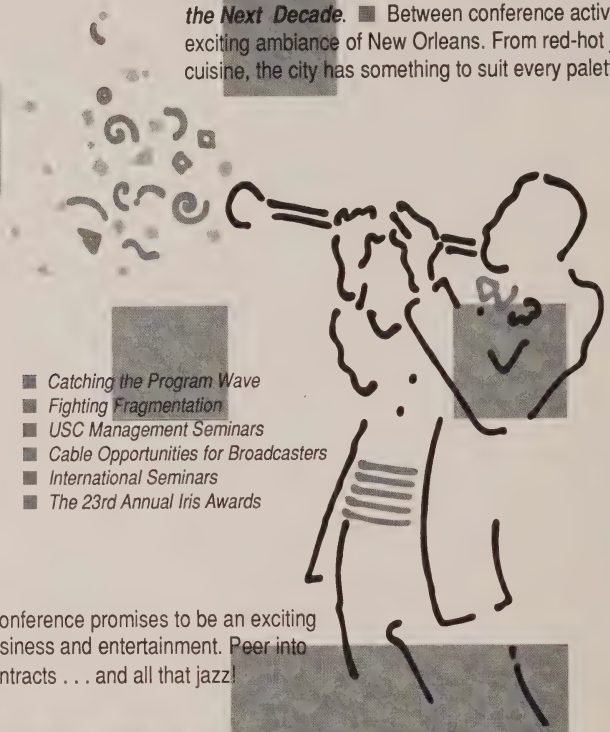

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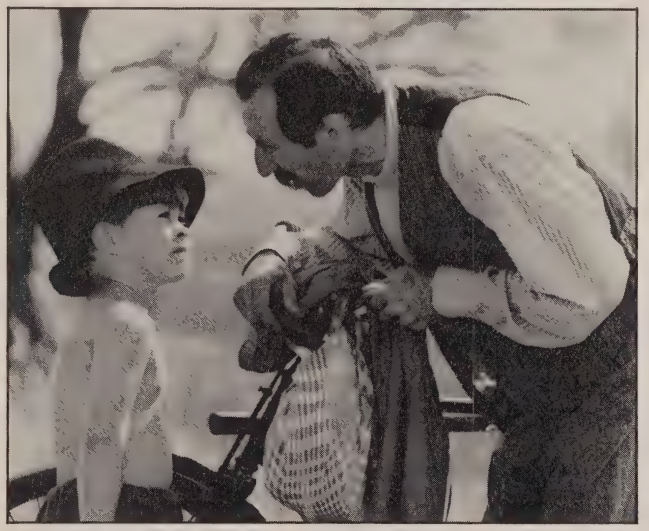
Leningrad TV – see p12

THE USSR & EAST EUROPE



Television remains a state-controlled communications medium in Eastern Europe. But the level of control and censorship varies between countries. Hungary, Czechoslovakia and increasingly the USSR are opening doors to western programme makers and are stepping up the level of East-West co-operation. Rumania, Bulgaria and Albania are still relatively uncharted territory for foreign distributors and producers. Poland is in the process of radical political reforms that will have profound effects on East/West Television relations.

Hungary has long been considered one of the more accessible Eastern European territories. Co-production between MTV and Western partners contineus to thrive as well as domestic production such as *God's Creatures* (right – see p.19).

Just what are Mikhail Gorbachev's policies of glasnost and perestroika doing to TV in the USSR? *TV World* examines developments in Gosteleradio, the state broadcaster (see p.16).

Good TV presenters can make or break a programme. Who are the most popular TV personalities in the USSR (see p.17).

A troubled economy places heavy restraints on broadcasting in Romania. Programming is dominated by coverage of president Ceausescu's activities (see p.18).

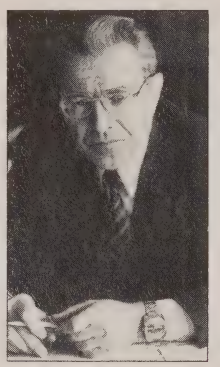
Czechoslovakian Television continues to increase the number of imported programmes it airs in an attempt to compete with cable and satellite TV from beyond its borders (see p.21).

East Germany may have a reputation for good cultural programmes but East Germans would rather watch TV from neighbouring West Germany (see p.23).

Poland is to get is first cable TV service (see p.18).

On the path of perestroika

Programme variety, openness to the West and network expansion are all part of the new blueprint for TV in the USSR. Paul Colston and Tatiana Matiushenko report.



TV BROADCASTING in the USSR is changing, and the audience's demands from TV are changing too. Two-thirds of the programmes on TV today are products of the perestroika era.

In 1985, a poll by sociologist Dr V Vilchek, showed that 66 per cent of the audience preferred to watch full length feature films, and only four per cent documentaries, reflecting a mood of escapism and the need for a world of fantasy to distract attention from the everyday routine. By 1987, while films were still popular, one-third of those asked now preferred to watch documentaries, which had taken on a sharp social content. 63 percent of the nation's TV audience tuned in to the documentary *Lenin: Pages of a Life,* about little-known events of the 1920s.

The number of information programmes is on the increase. Two years ago the breakfast TV programme *120 Minutes* went on air and quickly won a mass popularity; so it was extended, from its original 90 minutes to two hours.

Four years ago hardly anyone watched the Moscow City Channel, but this has now taken on a new lease of life, partly because producers have begun to aim programmes at specific groups, like the young and women.

Until the early 1980s, any attempts to meet viewer interests rarely went beyond sport. As the mouthpiece of official information, TV had nothing in common with public opinion.

In today's Soviet TV the structure of the day's broadcasting has become more clearly defined. There are five schedule blocks: early morning, pre-lunch, afternoon, evening and late evening. Night broadcasting is already being planned and producers are talking of 24-hour broadcasting.

New people are emerging to carry through the changes in broadcasting policy. The Soviet parliament recently appointed an energetic newspaper editor, Mikhail Nenashev, to head Gosteleradio (the State Committee for Television and Radio). His manifesto for the further restructuring of TV is yet to be made public, but it is awaited with interest.

Public opinion is beginning to influence the definition of programme success. Now a serious current affairs programme is judged on the quality of discussion, the pluralism of view expressed, and whether the issues dealt with touch the interests of the majority of viewers.

However, research shows that the alienation of people from TV has not been completely overcome. Poor programme choice, the heavily didactic tone, and the way programmes are aimed at a statistical Mr Average, are typical criticisms.

It is a fact that perestroika in TV is moving much more slowly than it is in the press.

In the USSR television was developed as a state institution from the very beginning. In this it differs from the newspapers and magazines. Although some do belong to departments of state, others are in the hands of social organisations, the Communist Party, the trade unions, literary groups or cultural foundations. This means that pluralism of opinion was always wider in the press than on TV.

In the majority of big towns and densely-populated areas the viewer has a choice between three channels – two national (available to 85 percent of the population) and one Republican or local. Certain regions can pick up as many as five channels.

Programmes go on the air in 48 languages of the Soviet nationalities and are prepared in 120 TV centres. Broadcasting takes place via several thousand transmission stations and retransmission stations, and also via three satellite systems – Orbita, Moskva, and Ekran. These stations and communication lines belong to the Ministry of Communications. Gosteleradio sets aside more than 60 per-cent of its two billion rouble (US$3 billion) budget for the use of this network.

Such a powerful and broad network has advantages but also weaknesses. There is no competition between the different channels – they are monopolised by the same central broadcasting authority. Interestingly, Moscow's central broadcasting is, in fact, being partly undermined by the Leningrad Channel, now available in the Moscow region and the Baltic republics. It is usually much livelier than the national channels and more daring in its treatment of sharp issues.

It has been suggested that National Channel-1 and Channel-2 be merged, a move which would trigger a change in the whole financing system.

At present broadcasts are planned according to directives from the Centre, which allocates production funds. Usually all programmes commissioned are broadcast, regardless of how good they are – the money has already been spent, and air time booked, the bureaucratic argument goes.

Alternative blueprints for financing suggest withdrawing all funds from the central editorial departments and transferring them into the hands of the channel executives.

On the one hand, this will allow payments to be made with regard to the public's response to the

(Top) Mikhail Nenashev, head of Gostelradio; (left) '120 minutes'.

programme, and on the other hand, allow producers to choose which film studio they want to work with. It would also free them to collaborate with the fledgeling co-ops, independent companies such as Videofilm, the creative unions and Novosti Press Agency.

Goskino (the State Committee for Cinema) and the Union of Cinematographers are actually preparing to take on the Gosteleradio monopoly by elaborating a plan for a new, commercial channel.

Another competitor is cable television which, although still in its infancy – existing only in some areas of Moscow – is picking up quickly. The financially independent Menex Centre, which started broadcasting this July, hopes to expand its cable broadcasts all over the capital within two years.

Menex has signed an agreement with Dutch television to take a four-hour weekly musical show. Meanwhile, Moscow council has announced plans to establish 22 cable channels in the city by 1992.

What is Gosteleradio doing about all this? It seems it has realised the need to compete: it has drawn up expansion plans of its own based on offering much greater programme variety. Dozens of new local studios are being built to boost the number of national channels to five. A sixth, high-definition channel, is also being planned.

Next year will see Gosteleradio increase its broadcasts by 17 per cent and by next five-year-plan (1991-1995) it aims to double the output. Sometime during that five-year period a new satellite system should be put into orbit, to be used for national, Republican and local broadcasting.

All the same, one cannot be sure that all these plans will be realised in time, bearing in mind the huge State budget deficit. So television must help itself financially.

One of the main methods of raising new revenue is, of course, commercial advertising. Soviet viewers have already had a taste of this, but it is set to develop in a big way.

New revenues are beginning to be tapped through programme sponsorship. The popular telequiz *What? Where? When?* has been successful in attracting sponsors, both Soviet and foreign.

But what will all these new channels and cable networks be filled with?

Central broadcasting and the local studios have some reserves, of course. One of the national networks is going to run a channel promoting contacts between the different Soviet nationalities – much needed in view of the current outbreak of ethnic tensions in the country. It has also been mooted that a parliamentary channel be set up.

Another likely departure is national TV signing agreements to transmit programmes produced by new independent media associations and co-operatives.

TV executives are keen to find more air-time for Western programmes. "It is a possibility that we could allot a permanently fixed time on Central Television for programmes contracted from English, American, French and other foreign companies," says Professor Vyilen Egorov, of the Gosteleradio Board.

At the moment, Soviet TV co-operates with 182 television organisations from about 100 countries. This co-operation includes co-production and exchange of films and programmes, either on a non-hard-currency or on a commercial basis.

Gosteleradio is stepping up its international co-operation, undertaking more film projects to order and offering broader assistance to foreign film crews working in the USSR. It is also keener to buy: last year 76 television companies from 24 Western countries bought a total of 462 Soviet films; while Central broadcasting signed deals for 113 films from the West. □

Talking heads

Every country has its favourite TV presenters, including the USSR. Paul Colston profiles some of the most popular.

Alexander Bovin (right) is a lawyer by profession and chief political analyst for the daily newspaper Izvestia. He is regular host of the Sunday current affairs programme *International Panorama* and also appears on *Studio Nine* and *Vremya* – the main national news programme. Bovin is not in the business of just pleasing the public. "I address myself to people who don't take anything on faith and expect you to argue your case." There are no bad questions, he says, "just bad answers".

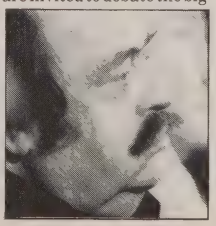
Yulia Belyanchikova is a TV doctor with a million patients, she presents the popular weekly *Zdorovye* (Health). She became a TV star by accident. After a freelance report on an international haematoloy congress she was immediately invited to host the show – and the mailbag increased from 300 letters a day to 10,000. "I think our whole team, director, cameraman and editors, feels the way a doctor does at a patient's bedside.

Vladimir Maslachneko, Goalkeeper-turned-sports commentator, is reckoned to have received more media awards than he has let in goals. No major game is complete without his voice.

Valentine Leontieva, recently axed after nearly 30 years as a presenter, began work on TV when there were just three announcers, and fronted the popular network children's programme *Goodnight Children*, which became a national institution. She sent the nation's children to bed with fairytales and stories for nearly three decades but it seems she had become the symbol of a passing era.

Vladimir Soloviev is a layman who presents the popular technology programme *You Can Make It*. It has been running for ten years and gives members of the public a chance to show their technical inventions to a panel of experts.

Vladimir Molchanov is probably the most popular TV host. He presents *Before and After Midnight*, a new show where famous figures are invited to debate the big issues of the day. Although there is no studio audience, Molchanov plays to the millions at home. Letters have inundated the national network asking for his show to be made weekly (he is only a freelance and the show appears irregularly).



(Above) vox pop with Soviet TV (left) Alexander Bovin.

Follow the leader

State policy and a troubled economy have held back the development of television in Romania writes Margie Lindsay.

ROMANIAN TELEVISION manages only a few hours of transmission a day because of energy shortages. The public has little choice in programmes – concentrating mainly on the life of the Ceausescu family, which rules the country. According to Romanian statistics, there are four main categories of popular television programmes: politics, commentary, education and variety.

It is difficult to tell whether these lisitings are more wish fulfilment by the harassed television producers, or a real reflection of people's taste. Listed under politics are news programmes concentrating mainly on economic news about the standard of living, industry and agriculture.

Under the education section comes one of the most popular programmes seen on Romanian television for the past 25 years, *Telencyclopedia*. Also screened are *World Mirror*, a programme on international life which explains Romanian foreign policy, and *Contemporary World and the Confrontation of Ideas*, which explains Romanian policies and those of other countries.

Variety programmes include *Song for Romania*, a series which shows pictures of Romanian life accompanied by songs, mainly of a patriotic flavour, and the forty-minute programme *The Star To Be*, which promotes amateur artists.

The flavour of a typical night's viewing can be given by the schedule of programmes shown one day in October. The programmes began at 20.00 with the news. This concentrated on the activities of Romania's leader Nicolaw Ceausescu. There were also black and white reports about energy, integrated circuits and agriculture. Background photographs are generally used to illustrate foreign reports. For example, an anchorman will read reports on South Africa, the Middle East and Israel illustrated by photographs in the background, rather than film footage.

The news lasts 25-30 mintues and is followed by a short report on specific events happening in Romania that day, such as a report on an international fair held in the capital, Bucharest, concentrating on machinery exhibited there and on what displays Mr Ceausescu managed to see. Following the news is a little light relief, usually in the form of theatre or drama, but often programmes of poetry and songs. These generally concentrate on the glory of Romania and the Ceausescu family, with such titles as *Glory to Ceausescu* and *Song to Romania – Homage to the Leader*. Programming ends usually with a short summary of the day's news.

At weekends with more emphasis is placed on children's shows, but also with a mix of political and news items for adults. For example, one Saturday recently shows *Weekend Magazine* followed by another political magazine programme about the week's events. These programmes took two hours to transmit, ending at 15.00. Programming resumed at 19.00 with news followed by an historical and political programme on one of the most controversial areas of Romania, Transylvania. This was followed by a music programme, a Romanian film and news, with programmes ending at 22.30.

Sunday offered *The World of Children* programme (lasting 60 minutes) as well as cartoons, popular music and circus programmes. On Sundays programmes are from 11.30 to 15.00 and 19.00 to 22.00. □

Opening the cable door

A new cable TV service is set to bring western programmes to Poland.

POLAND'S FIRST cable television company, Polska Telewizja Kablowa, has been set up as a joint venture. Members of the limited liability company include Polish Post, Telegraph and Telephone; the Polish radio and television central studio, Poltel; the Economic Initiative Support Fund based in Warsaw; the Warsaw co-operative, Pamit; the mayors of Warsaw and Cracow plus a foreign partner, William Sinkunus of the US. The company plans to install and operate cable television in Poland, starting in Warsaw and Cracow.

About US$47m will be invested in Warsaw and US$26m in Cracow. The service will initially include 12 channels translated into Polish. The first set of channels will be occupied by the two Polish television stations, educational and local programmes, information, sport and Soviet television. Subscribers will pay for this in zloty, the Polish currency.

Further channels will carry western-produced material (Britain's Sky Channel is one possibility) for which payment will be in US dollars. The first channel will cost subscribers Zl 12,500 plus a monthly rental of Zl 4,250. The second and third channels will cost Zl 7,500 for installation with monthly rentals of around US$6-$8.00.

There are also plans to provide for the installation of a cable television network in other towns. Under the plan, programmes from 19 European and US channels will be picked up. A broader range of programmes will be available to those paying in hard currency with a monthly subscription fee of around US$14.00.

■ Poland and France will co-operate in satellite television, including the reception by cable of the French-language TV-5 channel in some parts of Poland. The agreement came during a visit to Poland earlier this year by a French delegation led by Bernard Pottier, head of the communications department of the French Foreign Ministry. □

A gentle thaw

Political and economic reforms in Hungary, are opening doors of opportunity for Western Programme makers and distributors. Peter Lundy reports.

AFTER YEARS of imposed isolation behind the Iron curtain, Hungary's reform-minded communist leadership is slowly but surely relaxing its opportunity to western broadcasters and investors. Many attribute today's attitude of openness and co-operation to the effects of the western media. Western programming has been available to viewers for years on Hungary's national television channel MTV-1 (Magyar Televizio), and now even more so on the nation's newly relaunched second entertainment channel MTV-2.

Despite Hungary's relatively small viewing audience of nearly eight million, local production and international co-productions turn out a wealth of high quality made-for-TV movies, documentaries, drama-action and creative animation admired the world over. Hungarian studios are also well known for their production and technical expertise, and attract many foreign producers looking to save on production costs while obtaining a quality product.

Hungary's communist policy-makers are also desperate for foreign investment and hard currency, and have been quick to grant western businesses licensing and access to media ownership, most noticeably to-date in radio. Private television is expected to hit the airways in force once frequency allocations can be worked out for terrestrial broadcasters.

Rumours and speculation abound concerning the possible contenders for Hungary's first fully western-owned and operated private television station. A government memorandum has given several well-known western media groups time to position themselves to make a bid for the 12 frequencies that will be available after January 1, 1990. Sources within Hungarian television won't confirm, but are putting their bets on West Germany's Axel Springer Verlag headed up by Joseph Ferenczy in Munich to be the first on the air. The group is suspected to be preparing a possible station format drawing heavily on material already airing on their established satellite broadcaster SAT 1.

Rupert Murdoch's News International and Sky TV, along with Turner and CNN are also believed to be considering the prospects of a joint-venture with Hungarian broadcasters in launching private stations. CNN already has a modest investment in the form of its TNG news operation based in Budapest, which supplies material regularly for its international news service.

Many Hungarians already enjoy watching several western terrestrial and satellite stations. No official records exist, but it's been estimated that as many as two million people, or about 20 per cent of the nation's population receive some form of western programming via satellite. As many as three million viewers regularly watch Austrian terrestrial broadcasts spilling over from nearby border stations. Satellite broadcasters best picked up are Super Channel, Sky and Eurosport, France's TV5, and now the 24 hour-a-day music video channel MTV.

The only other alternative available to viewers seeking a change of pace from national broadcasts on MTV-1 and MTV-2 is programming from other eastern bloc countries. About four million viewers have access to Soviet and Czech terrestrial broadcasts.

Cable television is still considered experimental in Hungary. Only two major communities to-date, Tatabanya and Szekesfehervar have been cabled to any large degree, and provide about 200,000 homes with service.

HUNGARIAN national television, MTV, has had little choice but to watch recent developments with growing concern and interest. Station programmers rely on funding from the state to operate, and fear further funding may be cut back as a result of western competition. Hungarian officials have used the nation's first channel, MTV-1, since its inception in 1957 as a party
political organ to reach the public. The station's format today still consists largely of national politics, news, talk shows and some light entertainment. Hungary's second channel MTV-2, was only just recently relaunched on January 1, 1989 to provide a balance with more entertainment programming and commercials, in contrast to MTV-1's national and political orientation. Prior to January, MTV-2 was only on the air experimentally a few hours a day. Both channels now broadcast an average of 8 hours a day.

While most of the funding for MTV-1 and MTV-2 comes from the state, there is some revenue from commercial advertising. Time available for commercial announcements is strictly controlled on MTV-1, but may be relaxed in the future. MTV-2 is the main commercial station without advertising limits for announcements. The main roadblock to further sales of commercial time on the national channels has been the poor state of the Hungarian economy. With little disposable income available among the majority of the population, advertisers see little point in large campaigns or advertising investment.

Despite financial problems and tight budgets, Hungarian producers turn out many local television serials and special programmes with wide national appeal. The most popular programme on Hungarian television draws more than four million viewers every

(Above) 'Ekkehard' – mini-series co-produced between MTV, Libik Filmproduction and Radio Bremen. (Below) 'The Simon Wiesenthal Story – Murderers Among Us', made by TVS and HBO, and shot entirely in Hungary.

Imported programmes aired on MTV1+2 in 1988 (hrs approx)

Countries	Films	Documentaries	Music (pop)	Music (classical)	Total
UK	85	52.4	6.5	24.2	168.1
USA	117.5	29.5	1.35	5.65	154.
West Germany	65.7	46.5	3.3	1.8	117.3
France	89.8	6.6	6.6	.35	103.35)
Italy	21	9.9	.58	.43	31.9
Spain	8.5	7.13	–	.41	16
USSR	67.7	6.8	1.23	–	75.7
Czechoslovakia	48.8	3.9	.55	.55	53.8
East Germany	28.15	2	1.56	.32	32.3

Source: MTV programme dept.

second Thursday of each month: *Neighbours*, not to be confused with the Australian show of the same name, is a simple soap based on Hungarian family life. Hungary's second most popular show is a police information special called *Blue Light*, which pulls in excess of five million viewers when broadcast four times a year.

Not surprisingly, the most popular drama and action-adventure programmes are western imports. Imports account for about 22 per cent of all programming on both MTV-1 and MTV-2 combined. In addition, several co-productions with western producers also earn high ratings and appreciation in Hungary and abroad. German crime-action series *Derrick* (from ZDF) is by far the most popular imported series yet to be shown on Hungarian television. The series shows once a month to an audience of more than six million loyal followers. Originally in German, the show is dubbed into Hungarian and has been admired throughout the country for more than four years. Despite an erratic programming schedule, *TJ Hooker* has become the most popular American-produced imported programme on Hungarian airwaves, drawing about 3.5 million viewers on a regular basis with MTV-2.

The French 26-part production *Chateauvallon* also enjoys a popular following among Hungarian viewers. The show is dubbed and attracts in excess of three million viewers watching the soap on MTV-2, running against the national evening news on MTV-1.

Director for acquisitions Dr George Sos attributes the success of many foreign import productions to the Hungarian public's craving for western tastes.

"American and western programmes have the best ratings, it's true. That's been the situation for many years," he says. "Personally I'm not very happy with that, because I think the better western productions are not coming to Hungary. But the most popular ones are, and those are the programmes with crime, sex, violence and action. The viewers like them, so we buy them."

There are exceptions however to the assumption that western programmes need action, sex and violence to succeed in Hungary. The most highly-regarded programme to be shown on Hungarian TV during the last ratings period was the BBC documentary *The Living Planet*, earning 92 points on the 'national appreciation scale' of one to 100. The programme is only one part of a continuing series, and programmers look forward to airing further episodes. The German soap *Schwarzwaldklinic* also does well on national television. 26 epoisodes of the 74 part series have been aired so far, to a weekly audience of more than 3.5 million.

Despite their success at finding quality import programmes with national appeal, Hungarian programmers at MTV are concerned with prospects for the future. With an annual budget of only US$900,000 with which to purchase all import programming, executives look to co-productions to earn extra revenue and to provide quality entertainment at low cost.

Many major film and television producers have shot on location throughout Hungary for years, relying heavily on Hungarian production talents and technical skills. With a good exchange rate and modern facilities, most productions are brought in at far below the costs producers would expect to pay in the West. Co-productions are actually seen as money makers by MTV executives. Eager for hard currency, Hungarian co-producers and studios provide quality services and talent for western producers looking to save on costs and still achieve a respectable product.

"There isn't any real co-production in Hungary in the sense of production being 50/50," says Gyorgy Müller, head of MTV co-productions. "There are just too many problems with the economy and hard currency. Producers come here because costs are lower than in western Europe and the States. And also because our people are some of the best in the industry."

Along with earning hard currency, Hungarian co-producers also obtain the rights to show co-produced programming on national television at a fraction of the cost for import material. Hungarian viewers have been able to enjoy programmes such as *The Simon Wiesenthal Story* starring Ben Kingsley and co-produced with HBO and the UK's TVS. In production during August is also the made-for-TV film *Max and Helen*, co-produced with MTV and Turner Broadcasting. The film stars Trent Williams, Alkice Krige and Michael Landau, and is a love-story based on the novel by Simon Wiesenthal.

"We're looking forward to the day when we can attract more major co-production partners," says Gyorgy Müller. "Once we have a stronger economy and more money to finance co-productions, we'll be able to share more equally in the production costs."

Until that day arrives, Hungarian producers and broadcasters will continue to look to the West for economic inspiration and assistance. □

(Above) 'TJ Hooker' – Hungary's most popular import. (Below) 'Life On Earth'.

Czech imports up

The availability of foreign TV in Czechoslavakia is putting pressure on state television to compete. Edward Lucas reports from Prague.

CZECHOSLOVAK TV is increasing the proportion of foreign programmes in its output from 27 percent to 30 percent over the next three years. Officials deny that this is a response to viewers switching to more interesting programming from abroad but there can be little doubt that this has had some influence on the change.

Two public opinion surveys published in recent months by Federal Statistical Office have confirmed the dominant position television occupies in most Czechoslovaks' lives, their dissatisfaction with some aspects of the domestic output and the attractiveness of stations based in neighbouring communist and non-communist countries. 66 per cent of those asked said they watched television daily, more than either listen to radio or read national daily newspapers.

The survey states that West German and Austrian television are watched by only 27 per cent of the population, although independent observers regard this with some distrust, as well as the unlikely claim that 66 per cent watch television from East Germany (the only country in Eastern Europe with which Czechoslavakia has friendly political ties).

The survey does however hint at the dissatisfaction Czechoslovaks feel about their news and current affairs programming. 60 percent said they found the Czechoslovak media "unconvincing" when it responded to what the survey called "rumours spread among the population."

The official line on foreign television broadcasts is, according to an article in the communist party newspaper Rude Pravo last year, that "reception of foreign TV is part of our national culture."

Officials at Czechoslovak Television (CTV) say that they do not take foreign programmes into account when scheduling, and would prefer to compete using home-produced programmes than by screening bought-in material.

Mr Jiri Burda, deputy head of the CTV foreign department, said: "Czechoslovak television has trust in its programmes and its producers . . . it is tailored to the needs of the population." However he and other officials accept that viewers want more imported programmes, and they intend to provide them.

Two major imports currently being prepared for screening are an international film series *Stars of the Silver Screen* consisting predominantly of films from France, Italy, Spain, Britain and the USA, and the complete *BBC Shakespeare* series. The former will be broadcast over the next two years, the latter over the next decade.

He conceded that there were some areas, in particular coverage of international sporting events such as the Bruno Tyson boxing match, where CTV could not afford to compete, and viewers would switch to, for example, Soviet television.

Burda and other officials were unwilling to provide details such as the average cost per hour of the different types of bought in foreign programming, an overall figure for their budget for foreign purchases, or even the exact proportion of different types of foreign programme in their output. But he said he was confident that the state would meet the cost of the increase from 27 per cent to 30 per cent in the proportion of foreign programmes, which, would be spread evenly over all the range of programming currently bought.

As well as attempting to make Czechoslovak television more attractive, the authorities have also taken steps which have had the effect of making the reception of some foreign broadcasts more difficult. The powerful new 100kw transmitter at Votice had already made reception of Channel One of Polish television almost impossible in Prague, even with the special antennae which many viewers had previously bought. A new 200kw transmitter at Chomutov, due to begin operating in 1990 will have the same effect on the second channel. Viewers who like Polish television point out that the transmitter for Soviet television in the Prague area operates perfectly satisfactorily at a strength of only 40kw (all figures transmitting power).

Czechoslovak television is accepted as operating under political control. Burda said: "CTV is state financed, and the state has a political line which it pursues." Evidence of the politicisation is most conspicuous in the news and current affairs output, which is widely regarded as slanted against dissident and opposition groups.

Politicisation sometimes extends to quite trivial matters. The theme music of the highly popular series *Chalupari* (Cottage-owners), shot in the early 1980s, included a song by the former Czechoslovak pop-star Waldemar Matuska. When it was repeated earlier this year, viewers noticed that the song had been replaced with an orchestral arrangement. The reason: Matuska emigrated from Czechoslovakia in 1986 and had

Czech viewing

Watch TV daily	66%
Watch Soviet TV	14%
Watch Polish TV	22%
Watch W. German and Austrian TV	27%
Watch E. German TV	66%

Source: Federal Statistics Office, Czechoslovakia.

(Left): The BBC Television Shakespeare.

Czech TV imports

Country	programmes	hours
USSR	226	207
East Germany	179	220.6
Cuba	109	115.1
Bulgaria	107	151.1
UK	51	30.6
Switzerland	25	81
West Germany	21	48.5
France	21	42.1
Spain	17	55

Programmes on CST1 & 2 (1988)

Department	Hours
TV News	1223,2
Current affairs, docus	377.3
Advertisement	141,0
Sport	1024,3
Drama	500,8
Entertainment	395,2
Music	377.1
Imported programmes	1890,5
Children and youth	731,5
Educational	460,8

Imported programmes are also included in figures for other departments:-

Entertainment	0.45%
Educational	0.42%
Sport	23.9%
Children	0.85%

therefore become a person whose existence couldn't be publically acknowledged.

Political developments in Czechoslovakia earlier this summer faced senior television executives with some particularly difficult dilemmas. Many leading television personalities such as the actor Jiri Bartoska were among the first signatories of "Several Sentences" – the new opposition petition for reform and political freedom. There was considerable pressure from the authorities to blacklist future appearances by anybody signing the petition, which would have led to some extremely conspicuous gaps in the schedules. Continuing appearances by well-known personalities such as the pop star and petition supporter Hana Zagorova seem to indicate that for the time being at least, some of this pressure has been resisted.

Jiri Burda, although reluctant to go into detail, said rumours of reprisals against petition signatories were "a little bit exaggerated. The times are long gone . . . when a command or order meant more than the opinion of the population." □

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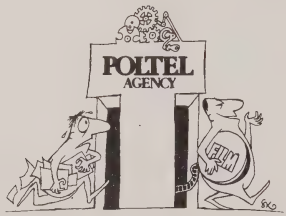

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Czech facts

Number of TV licence holders	4,662,000
Number of viewers per licence	3.4
Total transmission time (annual)	7,611 hours
Increase of TV licences	+237,200
Sale of TV sets	+577,100
Percentage of population reached	98.3%

Figures for 1988

Czechoslovakia: TV

Week ending July 30, 1989

Rank	Programme	Rating
1	Naked love (A2, France)	71%
2	Car – napping (Terra Film Kunst + D Geisler Film Product. West Germany)	69%
3	From Televariety	69%
4	Travelling Man (Granada, Great Britain)	67%
5	Travelling Man	63%
6	New guy has come today (Czech feature)	57%
7	Rambling Bohemia (Czech docu)	49%
8	TV news	46%
9	Short history of one family (Czech serial)	37%
10	Archives of the Time (Czech docu)	34%

Source: CST – research dpt.
1% = 80 thousand viewers (approx)

Television blues

East Germans don't think much of their national TV and often prefer to watch West German stations – and little change is imminent.

EAST GERMAN television remains one of the most conspicuous victims of the determination by that country's communist authorities to maintain appearances in the face of reality. Apart from an area around the south-eastern city of Dresden, where reception is impossible without a satellite dish, television programmes from West Germany are heavily preferred by East German viewers.

In the past, this provoked attempts by the members of the communist party youth organisation the FDJ (Free German Youth), to change viewing habits by the direct method of realigning TV aerials pointed to the west.

The authorities' attitude these days, however is one of studied indifference interspersed with bouts of venomous abuse. Although the signs are that it is entertainment and feature programmes which are most attractive to viewers in the German Democratic Republic (GDR), it is the news and current affairs programmes from West Germany which touch the authorities' rawest nerve. West German television journalists, whose regular and detailed coverage of the GDR, together with western German-language radio stations, provides in effect an "alternative home service" for the GDR, have on occasion been prevented from filming at protests and demonstrations. And the picture of events in West Germany and the rest of the world broadcast on West German television contrasts sharply with the primitive ideological stereotypes still predominant in the GDR media.

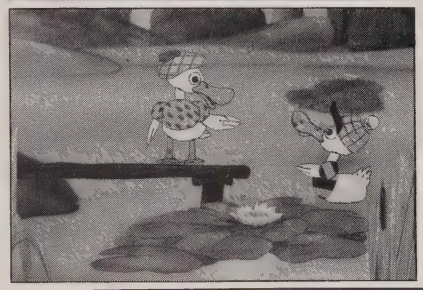
Perhaps the best example of the failings of GDR television is the weekly programme *Schwarze Kanal* (Black Channel) in which one of the country's most combatitive political commentators, Karl-Eduard von Schnitzler, with the help of clips from western television programmes attempts to discredit and disparage the western media and its world-view.

Mr von Schnitzler's commentary portrays western countries, and especially West Germany, as materialistic warmongers, bent on unjustifiable interference in the internal affairs of the peaceful, democratic and prosperous GDR. But even communist party members now admit privately that the programme and its contents are becoming an embarrasment.

Cultural programmes

For all its shortcomings and restrictions, however, East German television does come up with its share of good TV most noticeably in the field of cultural programmes and animation. Classical music and adaptations of novels are politically acceptable and are amoung the highlights of the schedule. East German TV (Fersehen der DDR) attends MIP-TV every year, achieving sales to non-socialist countries as well as exchanges within Intervision.

Despite the lack of entertainment programmes, and consequent lack of interest among the viewers, a relaxation of the strict ideological control over the country's television seems unlikely until broader (and at the moment equally unforseeable) political changes take place in the GDR's elderly and entrenched communist party leadership. □



(Above) 'Ende Vom Lied' (End of the Song) – A DDR drama fromthe early 1980s. (Below) 'Robby & Tobby' – animated programmes.

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- Musical programmes: *Ensemble dobrudzhanche* – 20 mins, *Robert Shoumann – pages from the album* – 15 mins.
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Taking on Big Three

The fourth network, Fox-TV, has been waging a guerilla war against the superpowers of broadcast TV in the US – with some success. Peter Broderick looks at the company that has the big three concerned.

THIS SUMMER Fox Broadcasting Company won some impressive victories in its battle against the Big Three networks: NBC, CBS and ABC. Despite its limited resources, and the competition from cable and home video, Fox has shown that it can win the "hearts and minds" of large numbers of viewers.

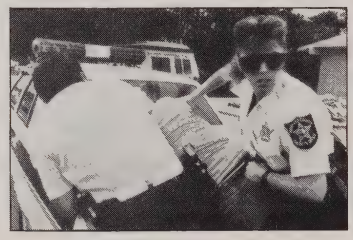
For the first time, Fox demonstrated the ability to beat its three rivals in head-to-head competition. During the summer Fox's *Married with Children, America's Most Wanted,* and *Totally Hidden Video* each won their time-periods once, and came in second on other occasions. Fox had the advantage of competing against network re-runs, but *Married with Children* was itself in re-runs when it finished first and second.

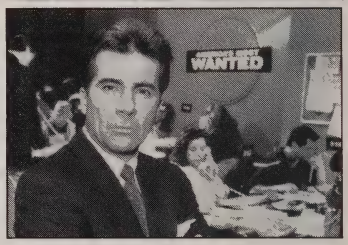
These victories are notable given the disadvantages Fox had to overcome. Almost 75 percent of its potential audience receives Fox on UHF rather than VHF. In addition, Fox is much less well known than its three competitors. It didn't start prime-time programming until the spring of 1987, adding a second night in July 1987. For the last two years, its two nights a week schedule has had to compete against the networks' daily schedules, which give them much greater opportunities for cross-promotion and audience cultivation. Another signifcant disadvantage is that Fox's owned-and-operated (O&O) stations and affiliates only reach 89 percent of the television viewing audience in the US. It will be hard to increase this coverage much further, since Fox now has an O&O affiliate in virtually every market where there is a fourth station. The first three stations in each market invariably align themselves with NBC, CBS or ABC. So where there is not a fourth station Fox has little chance to have an affiliate. Ten per cent of the country has three or fewer stations.

So given these disadvantages, how has Fox managed to win victories against the high-powered networks that have dominated commercial television for so long? Why is Fox's audience share rising while the combined share of NBC, CBS and ABC is falling? During the last week in July, the three major networks together only attracted 54 per cent of the viewing audience.

The simplest explanation is programming. Fox Broadcasting's Kevin Wendle, executive producer of *Totally Hidden Video*, explains. "We need to be in the business of being guerilla counter-programmers, if everyone else in town is offering deli sandwiches, we should offer Chinese food. Our programming needs to be very different."

Fox has made an aggressive attempt to differentiate its programming from that of its rivals. Viewers who see few distinctions between the programmes presented by NBC, CBS and ABC, and tire of their sameness, should be more interested in watching series that are different. Many of the shows on





Above left: 'Cops' subduing a suspect; above right: 'Totally Hidden Video'; above: 'America's Most Wanted.'

Fox's schedule, and many of those the network is developing, are unlike anything else on television.

One of the most innovative examples is *Cops*, a weekly programme which premiered on Fox's owned-and-operated stations last January, and then moved to the network in March. Billed as television's first and only "real-life police series", it is a documentary programme that shows actual policemen and women in action, both on and off duty. It is shot with a fast-moving, video verite style. Because neither scripts nor actors are used, it has a gritty documentary realism. The first series of shows followed deputies and officers of the Broward County Sheriff's Office in southern Florida, where the problems of drug-smuggling and sales are similar to those seen on *Miami Vice*.

According to Stephen Chao, vice president of programme development, Fox TV Stations, Inc., *Cops* originated from a concept for a one-hour documentary. "We were thinking of doing a show about the toughest cops in America." Miami, with all of its serious problems, seemed the best location. Then the idea of doing a series developed, which would allow the characters to be followed, and the drama to unfold in real life.

After completing production in Flordia, the series broke new ground by going to the Soviet Union, where six camera crews shot for 16 days on the streets of Moscow and Leningrad. The resulting special was called *Cops in Russia* when shown in the US and *To Serve and Protect* when shown in the USSR.

Another Fox series has received much higher ratings and much more press coverage. *America's Most Wanted* profile fugitives and suspects, re-enacts their crimes, and asks viewers to join the manhunt by dialing 1-800-CRIME89. Between June 1987 and August 1989, 50 of the 160 most wanted supects and fugitives profiled on the programme were captured because of leads generated by the series. Several dramatic arrests resulting from the programme have made newspaper headlines across the US. Such press coverage has been a critical factor in developing an audience, acknowledges Chao, who conceived the idea for the series.

A number of other elements have contributed to the show's sucess. Its host is John

CBS

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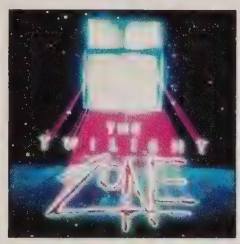

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Walsh, who became a nationally-known advocate for missing children after his son Adam was abducted and murdered in 1981. Another factor in the show's success is its interactive quality. Viewers can phone in their tips at any time, day or night.

Explaining the evolution of the show, Chao said: "I was concerned with credibility in terms of a batting average. We would have to choose situations with a probability of capturing somebody. By focusing on a fugutive, it gave us somebody to talk about and allowed for more story-telling."

Unlike the Big Three networks, Fox has used its O&O stations to experiment with new programming. The seven O&O's are used as a laboratory, where new show can be tested, if they are successful, then they may be put on the network (*Cops* and *America's Most Wanted*), or they may be syndicated (*A Current Affair*), a high-rating daily information programme. By using the stations as a lab, shows can be developed on their own terms and at their own pace, says Chao explaining that he isn't at the mercy of arbitrary deadlines, such as February for NATPE or May for the networks.

While Fox is developing programmes that are different, this does not necessarily mean they are original. The most recent Fox success is *Totally Hidden Video*, a series that premiered this summer. It is like nothing on NBC, CBS and ABC – at least currently. A *Candid Camera*-type programme, it places unsuspecting individuals in amusing or embarrassing situations. Alan Funt, the creater of *Candid Camera* sought a restraining order to prevent the series from airing. Funt revealed that actors were used in the pilot for *Totally Hidden Video* (the production company acknowledged this then fired the producer) and maintained that the series ripped-off certain *Candid Camera* segments. Funt and Fox reached an out-of-court settlement, and the series has continued to attract very large audiences.

Kevin Wendle illustrates Fox's commitment to "guerrilla counter-programming" with the following examples of programmes in development:

- *The Simpsons* A half-hour *adult* animated series using the cartoon family created by Matt Groening for *The Tracey Ullman Show*.
- *In Living Colour* A black comedy hour featuring Keenan Wyans, described as a cross between *Saturday Night Live, Laugh in* and *The Little Rascals*.
- *The Young Ones* Zany half-hour comedy.
- *Stringers* A half-hour crime series of documentary and drama.

Alien Nation begins this month, when Fox adds a third night of network programming. Inspired by the feature film of the same name, it features an unlikely pair of cops – one human, one alien. □

EVEN THOUGH Time has finally thwarted Paramount's unfriendly bid, Time and Warner management remains tight-lipped about details for the new company, both domestically and overseas. But it seems the less its executives talk, the more observers and competitors are willing to speculate about the potential fallout.

Will mega-mergers and acquisitions like Time Warner and Qintex/MGM/UA trigger further activity in Hollywood? Rich MacDonald, former director of equity research at First Boston who recently formed a new banking firm with two partners, said last spring that he expected all the major movie studios would be bought. But John Reidy of Drexel Burnham Lambert doesn't expect much to happen over the next 12 months. "We've been around the bend on Sony this, Sony that, which is clearly a company with the financial wherewithal, but I wouldn't hold my breath waiting for somebody from overseas to make an offer for a US company," he says.

Meanwhile, Australian-based Qintex is working to close its MGM/UA Communications deal by September 30, with additional equity partners reportedly coming from the US, the UK and France. But in the wake of Time Warner, the most often-repeated name at the forefront of major future acquisitions is Paramount.

"We will continue to build our core businesses aggressively in publishing and entertainment," said Martin S. Davis, Paramount's chairman and CEO in a statement following its unsuccessful bid for Time. "We are continuing to explore all available avenues, including acquisitions, mergers, joint ventures and partnerships."

McGraw-Hill, Tribune and Viacom have all been mentioned as potential targets, while other companies whose stocks have been bolstered by renewed interest and speculation include Knight-Ridder, Walt Disney, Columbia Pictures and MCA. Paramount's agreement in late July to sell its finance subsidiary (to the Ford Motor Company) for US$3.35 billion in cash heightens its ability to make the major acquisition is so desires. "Paramount clearly wants to get bigger, and it's going to buy one of the dozen companies already mentioned (in the press)," says Dennis McAlpine of Oppenheimer. "That will be one consolidation, and you may see something else forced through because of it. But remember, despite all the press, the basis behind the Time Warner merger was primarily one of self-preservation for each of the two companies."

Interest in acquiring major media companies remains high, but so do the price tags. Larry Gerbrandt of media analysts Paul Kagan Associates says simply, "the majors are always very cognisant of market share."

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The Time Warner take-over battle ov

that the merger will have on the pr

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But while the merger may not portend another blockbuster, it has clearly accelerated the pace of European and American partnerships. A flurry of recent pacts heralds a new era moving beyond individual projects to co-ventures.

Westinghouse Broadcasting just paired with French advertising firm Havas and production company TeleImages to form FuturImages, a Paris-based production house for television movies and mini-series. Similar programming will come from another joint venture between Hollywood independent Imagine Films and Britain's Central Independent Television, with the first project slated for production later this fall. Earlier this year Central and two US syndication veterans formed Zodiac Inc., a Los Angeles-based company aimed primarily at developing animated and children's programming.

Bigger competitors to Time Warner in both motion pictures and television have stepped up their activity too. As a major distributor of foreign films in the US, Orion hopes to build on its relationship with Europe and to become more involved in the co-production arena.

New World International, now focusing exclusively on televison, is currently shooting *Zorro* on location in Spain with The Family Channel. "Market forces in Europe are dictating more co-productions," says Jim MacNamara, executive vice-president of New World International. "But while that hyphenated word, co-production, trickles out of mouths so easily, it's very difficult to pull off. It's virtually impossible to keep everyone happy on a co-production."

Analysts agree that the previous marriage of Warner and Lorimar means far more to European television than Time Warner does, citing HBO's minimal production output in

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Harvey Solomon examines the effect
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oration's competitors feel?

comparison to its giant partner. "Warner will take a more active role in distributing HBO product," says Gerbrandt, "but the biggest concern for the other distributors is Warner/Lorimar – that was what created the Warner powerhouse."

The integration of HBO into Warner's distribution apparatus remains unclear, but Warner earns 40 per cent of its revenues overseas (as opposed to less than 10 per cent for Time). "This is part of the magic of our merger," Steven Ross, chairman and CEO of Warner, told stockholders in mid-June. "The combined marketing power of Warner's international distribution capacity and Time's prowess in direct marketing will generate dynamic revenue growth."

By all accounts, former Lorimar and now Warner President of International Distribution Michael Solomon has done a superhuman job handling a surfeit of programming. "He must sleep with his catalogue under his pillow at night in order to remember what he has in there," says one distributor. Yet the Warner sales force is legendary – some say mercenary – in maximising revenue on each product. "The sales people and the quality of the programming make all the difference," says Jessica Reif of CL Global Partners, "and Warner and Lorimar have some of the best sales people, particularly in foreign."

Time Warner, however, may have a tough time maintaining the status of price leader.

John Laing, senior VP at Orion International (and a former VP of sales at Warner): "If the management of a company is under pressure to move large volumes of product, and in this case it could be because there is so much product, they'll be forced to sell at less favourable prices." Yet an arsenal of programmes still offers unmatched flexibility at the bargaining table. "We all still have to convince buyers that a particular show is the best," says New World's MacNamara. "Then, the pricing is a different negotiation . . . Warner has a big challenge ahead of it to continue to get its market share. There's a finite amount of money that goes around."

Any discussion of programming in Europe today invariably leads to talk about quotas. Just as the countries themselves cannot seem to agree on this volatile issue, so do the analysts offer wide-ranging opinions. Though most see quotas as an obvious spur to co-productions, most discount any effect on the major US distributors. "If you've got a strong film or television show, it's going to be shown over there because of demand," says Drexel Burnham Lambert's Reidy. "You can't impose quotas when the public wants to see something." Orion's Laing, a British native now based in New York who has lived more than half his life in Europe, sees both sides of the equation. "In a way, the American companies are seen as big ogres that simply go in and sell," he says. "I see why that perspective is there, but at the same time I don't think the Europeans have enough to be scared about to issue quotas. The American distributors help them make their systems work right now, and they will continue to contribute to maximising the success of those systems."

There is unanimous agreement in debunking the supposition that new giants like Time Warner will be less likely to take creative risks with new programmes. "Warner and its multiple studio operations will continue to seek out product ideas from wherever," says Reidy. "They might come from Italy or they might come from Dallas." Some draw an analogy that parallels Warner's success in music. "Except for a corporate financial level, every Warner division is very decentralised," says CL Global's Reif. "Their different units are very creative, and I don't buy that Time Warner will have a big company mentality. Warner is currently the most succesful record company, and I believe that's due to their many record labels. It's like a lot of little companies operating together, getting the benefit of pooled manufacturing, distributing, and marketing. But the creative side is totally separate."

So creative decision-making and risk-taking by competitors should nullify the doomsayers' predictions of a Time Warner lock on programming in Europe. Similarly, when a competing cable system executive in the United States, where both companies have extensive cable holdings, was asked about the merger's ramifications, he replied, "The other players will have to scratch and claw a bit harder to hang on. But is that so bad?"

In Europe, programmers are taking the long-term view. "As the television systems around the world mature," says Orion's Laing, "they're going to look more and more to producing their own product, whether it be with their own producers or with outside producers from the same country. They're catering to their audience, a foreign audience, and the more we can participate in their success, be it selling our own product or making product with them that we can sell in the US, the better off we'll all be."

Time Warner's magazines and TV properties – who's next on the merger list? (Above, top) 'Lonesome Dove': part of Qintex merger; (Above) 'Slap Maxwell' – in Warner's catalogue. (Right) John Laing.

Can we talk?

1989 was a big year for small-talk with more and more talking heads filling the screen in daytime and late-night slots. Arnold J. Friedman reports

SMALL TALK is big bucks in the US where stations are pulling day-time and night-time audiences with talk shows. They are comparitively inexpensive to produce and affordable to acquire on a barter or cash-barter basis.

Some are exported, which makes them even more cost-effective for producers. According to the trickle-down theory of distribution, the price is lighter for stations as well.

Phil Donahue has hosted 230 hours of dramatic social controversy annually for almost 22 years. For years *Donahue* was traditionally the number one show in late afternoon schedules, following the soaps. Then King World's *The Oprah Winfrey Show* blew out of Chicago like the wind off that city's lake Michigan. Today, *Donahue* usually runs a steady number two to *Oprah*. Both are seen in 99 per cent of the country and are therefore often head-to-head. *Donahue* producer-distributor Multimedia Entertainment points out that *Oprah* and other new talk shows have expanded the audience. *Donahue's* rating remain substantially the same and in fact he is benefitting from the competition, they say.

That's what they all say. All the talk shows competing with the established ones claim they are not competition for other on-the-air strips; rather they are bringing back audiences that have strayed over to the enemy cable.

Geraldo is sometimes up against both *Donahue* and *Oprah* in the afternoon; in other markets he plays against *Sally Jessy Raphael* in the morning. Actually, he's all over the schedule – popping up in early and late fringe as well. Hosted by Geraldo Rivera, who has never been accused of journalistic integrity, the show's format includes pre-packaged video field pieces and long-distance guests interviewed via satellite as well as studio guests and live studio audiences. Distributor Paramount Pictures claims only slightly less coverage for the show – 98 per cent of the country – and notes that in the May sweeps *Geraldo's* viewership increased by 12 per cent, while *Oprah* and *Donahue* both slipped by eight per cent.

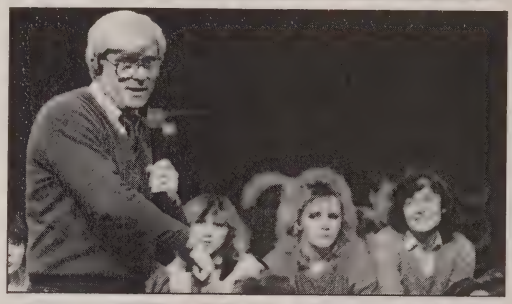
The daily hour of chat is not as popular with the critics, who now say *Geraldo* carries the Trash TV banner dropped by Morton Downey, Jr. who's controversial *Morton Downey Jr Show* has been cancelled by MCA Television.

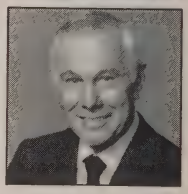
Although King World calls Oprah the First Lady of Television because of her pre-eminent rating position, the lady who was out there first is Sally Jessy Raphael. She is still out there, a classy 31 year veteran of radio and television talk shows whose mostly morning time slots have consistently attracted large shares of female viewers.

For four of the six years that Multimedia has been producing and distributing her show it has been available in both half hour and one hour formats. Because most stations have been opting for the hour version, the half hour programme will no longer be edited down. Since the announcement, about 40 more stations have been added to Sally's lineup, bringing the total to 160 – all of which programme the show in the morning.

It seems that the available audience is increasing, that it is being brought back from calbe and home video or wherever it has done. And with it comes Joan Rivers, back again, with another daytime hour of what she used to do for Fox at night. *The Joan Rivers Show* will include interviews, discussions and entertainment.

It is another of the three talk shows distributed domestically by Paramount. Worldwide it is sold by Richard Price ►





Left column: Oprah Winfrey, Phil Donohue, 'After Hours'. Right column: Joan Rivers, Byron Allen, Geraldo Rivera, Arsenio Hall, Johnny Carson.

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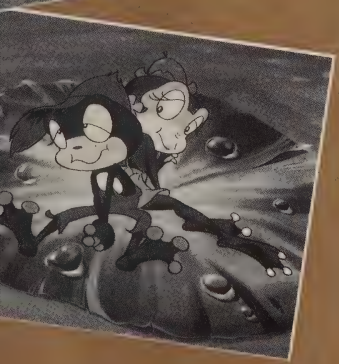

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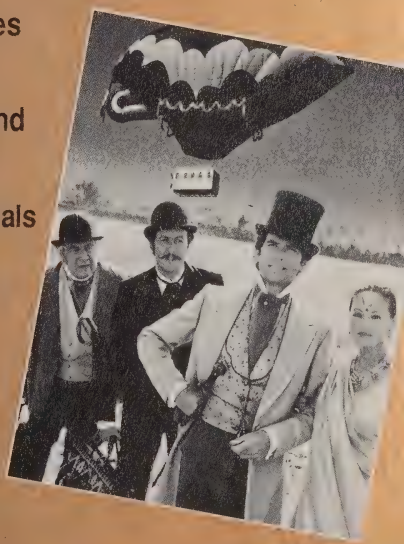

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Television Associates of the UK, and has a better shot at UK audiences than the others, because of Rivers' track record there. In 1984 she became only the third person to appear as the sole guest on London Weekend Television's *Audience With* programme, which broke ratings records and led to a BBC-TV contract. Her series of six one-hour specials titled *Joan Rivers: Can We Talk?* aired in 1986 and garnered the highest ratings for a talk show in the network's history.

The third of Paramount Domestic's talk programme is *The Arsenio Hall Show*, which premiered just before this year's NAPTE convention in January. It's an hour-long late-night syndicated programme bucking both Johnny Carson's NBC Network *Tonight Show* and the troubled *Pat Sajak Show*, on CBS.

It's been doing very well all year and is the only late night talk show to increase over its May 1989 performance in the July sweeps, according to Nielsen data.

Hall's style is decidedly different. For one thing, he won't stay behind a desk, preferrring to be out with his guests in a conversation area. And his guests are picked primarily to appeal to an 18-49 demographic.

"The young and young-at-heart didn't have a late night talk party," said Hall, whose show is now airing on 135 stations representing more than 90 per cent of US viewing households.

Another newcomer this season is the much promoted *Byron Allen Show*, the first one-hour talk/variety programme specifically designed for weekend late night viewing. It's not a strip, which means it's going up against *Saturday Night Live*. But Allen and distributor Genesis Entertainment do not expect to draw their audience from this Saturday night institution.

"I'm grateful to Sajak and Hall for proving there is room for new programming in the late-night time slot without going after viewers from established shows," says Allen, adding, "*The Tonight Show* kept its ratings while the other shows built their own audiences."

The Byron Allen Show airs in most markets Saturday nights at 23.30, on network-owned or affiliated stations in over 85 per cent of the country. Allen expects to attract top performers and celebrities because he can offer them two exposures instead of the usual one. There are 26 original shows and 26 repeats.

Finally, this fall's latest late night entry is not a talk-show at all. According to Randy Hanson, Jr., VP for domestic sales for Worldvision Enterprises, the appropriately named *After Hours* is designed for counter-programming the talking heads. Also, says Hanson, "It is the first syndicated show in its time period specifically designed to compete directly against cable programming."

After Hours is a fast-moving magazine strip so intent on rapid-fire segments of music, comedy, celebrity profiles and lifestyle reports that it has eliminated the host altogether. The gag is an off-camera Director's Voice from the control room, in constant contact with *After Hours'* field reporters.

After Hours is set to start this month in the US and Canada and will premiere in January in Spain, Germany, Turkey, Finland, South Africa, Peru and Luxembourg.

Meanwhile, NBC's *Late Night With David Letterman* continues to maintain a loyal cult audience, despite the reluctance of some celebrities to come on and be abused by the irreverent host. And apparently untouched by all the competition, Johnny Carson retains the lead on NBC night-time. The daddy of them all, Carson's *Tonight Show* is now in its 27th year.

But the "cultiest" host of all is Joe Franklin, who claims to have invented the talk format 38 years ago, when daytime television was still a novelty. Franklin likes to recall that what Letterman is doing now he was doing then. He says his show was bizarre.

It still is, but no one is sure he knows that. Aired very late at night (1.30) on WWOR-TV in New York (where he has worked for 27 years), *The Joe Franklin Show* has attracted all kinds of guests.

Nine years ago, WWOR-TV became a national super-station, making its programming available to cable systems serving about 10 million subscribers nationwide. Now that Franklin has become a national novelty, he is no longer considering retirement. He's staying, he says. □

Syndicated talk-shows
(August 7-13, 1989)

Programme	Rating	H'holds
Oprah Winfrey Mon-Fri, 1 hr.	7.5	6,780,000
Geraldo Mon-Fri, 1 hr.	5.9	5,333,600
Donahue Mon-Fri, 1 hr.	5.4	4,811,600
Sally Jessy Raphael Mon-Fri, ½ hr.	4.0	3,616,000
Arsenio Hall Show Mon-Fri, 1 hr.	3.9	3,525,600

Network talk-shows – night
(August 7-13, 1989)

Tonight Show (Johnny Carson) Mon-Fri, 1 hr, NBC.	5.6	5,060,000
David Letterman Show Mon-Fri, 1 hr, NBC	3.5	3,164,000
Pat Sajak Show Mon-Fri, 1½ hrs, CBS	2.8	2,530,000

In praise of free TV

Tired of seeing its audience diminishing, America's commercial networks have renamed themselves "free TV" and have set about telling everyone how good they are. Harvey Solomon reports.

NO LESS a figure than venerable CBS newsman Walter Cronkite reappeared simultaneously on more than 1000 US television stations last July to extol the virtues of free TV. An estimated 54 million viewers saw his inaugural promotion for broadcast TV's new consumer awareness campaign, and the message will be reinforced through the next year via such specialised, diverse promos as country and rap music spots.

"Today, free advertiser-supported television is endangered," says Milton Maltz, chairman/CEO of Malrite Communications and chairman of the National Association of Broadcaster's free television task force. "Increasingly, cable and VCRs are siphoning programming away from free television. Other technologies threaten to accelerate the trend . . ." Since the mid 1970s, broadcast TV's 90+ per cent share of prime-time viewing has fallen to around 60 per cent, and most industry observers foresee a continuing drop. Fred Schneier, former executive vice president of programming at Showtime a cable movie-channel, and recently-named president/COO of Viacom Pictures, told an audience of television critics in July that independent broadcast, pay and basic cable services will split TV audiences 50/50 with commercial broadcast networks by 1993.

Tired of watching their shares decline as audiences watch alternatives, broadcasters are seeking to improve this picture through two concurrent campaigns championing the cause of "free TV." The Cronkite spot kicked off the NAB's campaign, aimed at the general public and Washington D.C. policy-makers. Meanwhile, the Television Bureau of Advertising (TVB) has begun formulating its "Turn on the Power" industry campaign.

The "Power" campaign targets advertisers, agencies and people who influence these decision makers like family, friends, business contacts, etc. Rather than solicit stations for direct monetary contributions, TVB is instead asking for airtime. 80 per cent of the donated airtime will be used to run the campaign's spots, while the remaining 20 per cent will be resold to national advertisers in order to raise the money necessary to fund the programme. Preston Padden of the INTV, plus the affiliate advisory boards of ABC, CBS and NBC have all endorsed the "Power" concept.

"It's time for the greatest marketers in the world – TV broadcasters – to start telling this story, selling the benefits of free television," says Malrite's Maltz. "We must educate the public that free TV is not a birthright. In many parts of the world, there is no free television. Our broadcast system is a precious national resource that must be nurtured and preserved."

Sounding such a noble rallying cry has meant taking the high road, stressing the benefits of broadcast television while scrupulously avoiding outright "cable-bashing."

But for the major networks within the industry, the battlelines are not so sharply drawn. Two of the three networks have extensive and expanding cable holdings. This past spring NBC launched CNBC, its 24-hour consumer and business news channel. The network also owns half of Rainbow Program Enterprises, which includes cultural channel Bravo, vintage movie channel American Movie Classics and SportsChannel America, now consisting of eight regional sports networks. NBC and Capital Cities/ABC, along with the Hearst Corporation, each own one third of The Arts & Entertainment Network, while ABC also owns one third of the women's network Lifetime and 80 per cent of the 24-hour sports giant, ESPN.

WCBS's Pizza Principle: a taste of things to come.

What you are watching is called free television. It's part of a system – born 50 years ago – that is unlike any other in the world. Through your free TV window, you've been witness to triumph and tragedy . . . to love, laughter, learning, life. It's offered free to all, even the cable systems that carry it. Imagine the impact if it were gone. Join us in the coming months as we celebrate and stand watch over free TV.
Walter Cronkite, July 17, 1989.

Conspicuous by its absence is CBS, whose last foray into cable was the ill-fated CBS Cable that folded in the early 1980s. Perhaps not coincidentally, CBS has launched the most aggressive anti-cable campaign targeted at national advertisers. A lavish analogy entitled "The Cable Fable" tells of the giant Networkus, whose work in the Kingdom of Broadcastia is threatened by the Wizard of Fragmentation. A thick binder bulging with statistics accompanies the story to support its unmasking of the "cable fable." ABC also released its own pro-broadcast report, "20 Questions," which contrasts the reach of cable versus network and concludes that "there's *no* question about network TV."

Individual stations have also commissioned surveys of their respective markets, with WCBS's (Channel 2) "The Pizza Principle: A slice of reality about television in the New York DMA" clearly one of the most striking. Its cover, featuring a huge, 18" round photo of a pepperoni pizza with a slice missing, has whetted the appetite of more than a few New York ad agency moguls.

"The national network and local station standpoints on cable are very similar," says Richard Appel, research manager at WCBS and creater of the pizza approach. "Cable networks collectively have penetrated each market significantly enough, and sold that penetration aggressively enough, to finally get a foot in the advertiser's door . . . But viewers with 50 or 60 channels still spend most of their TV time with the three they had in the first place. So while viewers might want their MTV, they need their CBS, NBC and ABC." □

Lessons in co-producing

No two co-production deals are the same, they say. So how can European programme-makers develop a successful formula for working together?

"The Manageress".

BRITISH PROGRAMME-makers face a choice: to embrace the opportunity of working with their European counterparts willingly or to be dragged, kicking and screaming, in to the co-production arena. Either way, there is no doubt that co-production between European partners is an economic necessity with which producers both sides of the water are going to have to come to terms.

This much is clear. But what remains unclear is how producers should go about co-producing, how can the different needs of the various co-production partners be satisfied and, at the end of it all, can quality programming be the result.

These were some of the questions raised during a seminar "Why Bother? Co-producing with the British" sponsored by the international programme distributor ITEL at the Edinburgh International Television Festival last month.

The seminar was chaired by Patrick Dromgoole, head of the UK ITV company HTV and himself one of the foremost co-producers in Britain. The panel members were Jacques Dercourt head of Telecip the French production company; Dr Roberto Pace of the European Co-production Association; Sedat Orsel head of Turkish Television's Sales and Co-production Department; and David Cunliffe managing director of ITC Productions.

With TV expenditure in Europe set to grow dramatically, European producers must find ways of exploiting this market to the full if they are to survive and maintain their levels of production.

In opening the discussion Patrick Dromgoole warned that if European producers did not take action now in working together the European market would be won by the distributors of less expensive programming from the US and Europeans would miss their biggest opportunity to create a European Culture.

While the panellists were in agreement on this, their views differed on the best way to achieve this goal and the kinds of programmes that could be made on a co-production basis. The discussion concentrated on drama and did not include the other programme genres which can be, and have been, successfully co-produced (documentaries, wildlife and music/variety programmes).

Dr Pace, whose organisation the ECA has been involved in the co-production of around 100 hours of programming since its creation three years ago, was critical of the British, claiming that their approach to co-production often lacked consideration of their partners' needs. A problem acknowledged by David Cunliffe. He pointed out that British producers were sometimes ignorant of working practices in continental Europe where the programme director rather than the producer has complete authority over the project, contracts are considered unnecessary, union rules are different, and understanding of basic production details is often at variance with the British. "British producers want to make British stories with British actors," he said "How can you take such projects to the Italians, unless you can offer them a sale in the US."

Cunliffe is currently seeking a sale in the US for the thriller *Touch and Die* a co-production between RAI2, ITC, TF1 and Beta Taurus. It features three American actors and should prove to be a subject acceptable in the US.

On the subject of financing, Dr Pace put forward his view that funds should be arranged before any project is conceived. With the finance assured, he explained, the co-production partners can begin the creative process of developing the programme.

"Co-production must be a means to enhance the quality of programmes not to diminish it," he said. The ECA is an association formed by seven European broadcasters including Channel 4 in the UK, Antenne 2 in France, ZDF of Germany and Italy's RAI – to fund the development of co-productions. The *Eurocops* series, *Octopus* and *The Manageress* are among some of the results so far. *Eurocops* is an example of a mixed co-production – six broadcasters each contributed one episode of the series, based on European police, and received the others free.

According to Dromgoole however, this kind of reciprocal arrangement is often unsatisfactory because there is no guarantee that the programmes submitted by the other partners will be suitable for transmission.

Dromgoole and Jacques Dercourt are sceptical about Pace's money-up-front approach. "You can form administrative arrangements between companies and governments," he said, "but then finding the programme becomes an exercise in filling in the gaps".

Dercourt and Dromgoole have worked together on several co-production projects in the past including *Frontier* and *We Are Seven* and are currently discussing a new Telecip project *Coup de Foudre* (Love at First Sight). Reteitalia of Italy, SSR of Switzerland, Spain's TVE, Portugal's RTP, Crawford Productions of Australia and HTV are all currently looking at ideas, scripts and production details for the series of 27 half hour love stories.

Dercourt and Dromgoole are aware of the opportunity for Euroseries that take the differences between Europe's national cultures as their starting point for co-production.

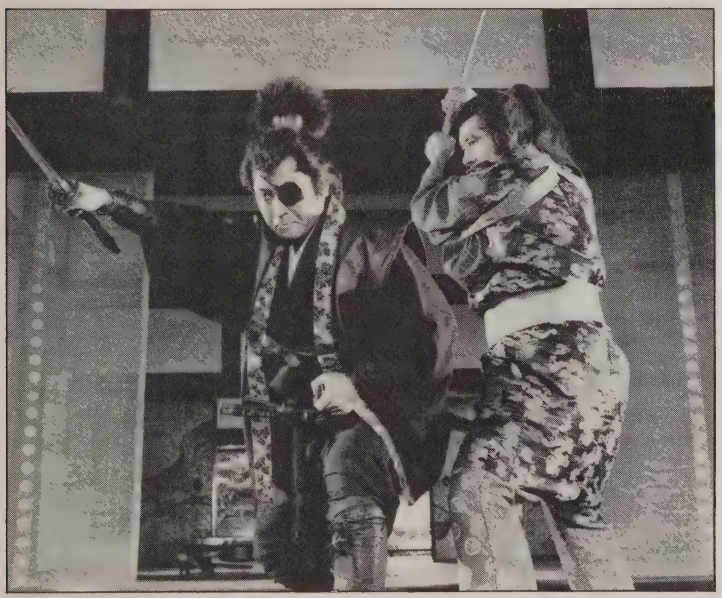
They have been discussing the possibilities of producing a six or eight hour programme about Napoleon Bonaparte – a man who influenced the course of history in both Britain and France but who is remembered quite differently in the two countries. Two programmes could be produced – one English, one French – which share many of the same scenes but which give two distinct accounts of Napoleon's life – one from the French viewpoint, the other from the British.

There are difficulties to be overcome to co-produce successfully in Europe and of course several were discussed: working practices, the problems of language and the poor standard of British dubbing were all touched upon. But there was much said to warm the hearts of would-be co-producers.

Speaking from the floor, the Frenchman Michel Noll of Quartier Latin told the audience: "Before co-production I was working in colour and I thought it was good. Now that I am co-producing I am working in spectrums". □

Stretching a point

Mini-series in Japan have to compete with regular shows and the national passion baseball for consecutive prime-time slots. Roger March finds that patience is a Japanese virtue.



"Fu-un Edo Jo": Japanese New Year drama.

THE WESTERN notion of the mini-series is out of place in Japan, where programmers operate to a different set of rules. In understanding these differences, much is revealed about Japanese TV in general.

It is not uncommon to be watching a replay of a tennis match that is interrupted at the most exciting stage in the game by the TV announcer who says, "Tune in next week at the same time for the exciting conclusion of this enthralling match!" At the same time, extra-long feature films, for example, *War & Peace* are usually shown in two parts, one week apart. In other words, not only are there few instances of anything being shown on consecutive nights but the Japanese viewing public is prepared to wait one week to see the conclusion of something.

Exactly why Japan differs from other countries in this cannot be easily understood. According to Kazuya Sato, an NHK producer, "Japanese work longer and are perhaps busier than people in other countries. Finding the time to watch a programme on consecutive evenings is very difficult".

While cultural differences go some way to explain the absence of consecutive programming on Japanese TV, there are a few hard-nosed business reasons as well.

Roots was the first big foreign mini-series shown in Japan; the first part rated an average 23.4 per cent and the second 15.2 per cent. The broadcaster was TV Asahi. Although it has bought several series since then, unspectacular ratings have made it more cautious. *Kane and Abel* was shown last year on consecutive evenings – but after the video version had been on store shelves some weeks. It averaged 9.7 per cent. Also, the disastrous ratings performance of *Dallas* on Japanese TV several years ago is still a vivid memory for many programmers.

NHK occasionally buys mini-series from abroad. To celebrate the 100th anniversary of Charlie Chaplin's birth, the public broadcaster ran the Thames TV production *The Young Charlie Chaplin*. Shown on three consecutive days (Wednesday To Friday) at 22.00-22.45 each night, it rated 7.7 per cent, 8.4 per cent and 6.5 per cent respectively. BBC's three-hour *Jane Eyre*, on the other hand, was broadcast on one Saturday evening (19.20-20.50 and 21.05-22.35). "Only NHK has the programming flexibility to do such things," says Chief Director Yasushi Nishino.

Flexibility may go a longway to explaining why mini-series are not popular in Japan. Japanese commercial TV programming conforms to rigid rules and neither sponsors nor broadcasters are willing to fiddle with traditional broadcasting patterns. (For example, NHK produces many of its programmes in 45-minute blocks, not in the hope of foreign sales, but because that was the length Americans ordered during the Occupation after World War II.)

Japanese TV is awash with regular programmes, and that leaves little room to slot in a different show for one week only. According to Mr Hoshi of TV Asahi: "Japanese sponsors and programmers are loath to suspend a programme for one week. Regulars bring in stable ratings."

Another factor is the broadcasting of baseball, a game that enthralls the Japanese, and dominates their airwaves, from April to September. Every night of the week a baseball game is shown on at least one network throughout Japan and nothing takes precedence over baseball broadcasting.

That leaves the Japanese version of mini-series to be shown in April, October and the New Year. April and October are the beginning of the new viewing seasons and a new viewing seasons and a new programme will be shown as an extended special on one night, or over two nights, to whip up enthusiasm for the series to come.

As for top-quality, high-budget mini-series, the New Year is the one time when sponsors are willing to pay for big budget productions. Japan closes down for about a week over the New Year and most Japanese spend their time at home relaxing and watching TV. Therefore, even a medium-size broadcaster like TV Tokyo can afford to produce a New Year mini-series (often a samurai drama 12-20 hours in length, and shown over three to five days that costs ¥30 million (US$210,000) an hour and gets a rating in the top 20.

'La Vallée des Espoirs'

One that got away

In the race for ratings in France, some broadcasters are wary of programming mini-series. But when TF1 shelved one particular mini-series, Antenne 2 showed it – with success. Paul Michaud reports.

WHEN IT was shot two years ago, *La Vallée Des Espoirs* (The Valley of Hope) a six-hour family-oriented melodrama in four parts, had everything going for it: its subject (reminiscent of *The Waltons*); a budget important enough to permit shooting on location in Alsace-Lorraine and Poland; one of French TV's best directors (Jean-Pierre Marchand, who'd just won a number of prizes for his made for-TV movie *Le Parfait Amour*); and superb casting including Milena Vukotic, Riccardo Cucciolla, Patrick Catalifo and Isabelle Gruault).

The completed film, as could be expected, turned out to be one of French television's most ambitious, and could have been one of co-producer TF1's stars of the 1987-88 season. By the time *La Vallée Des Espoirs* completed shooting however, in August 1987, TF1 had been privatised and was being run by a new team whose principal concern was no longer prestige, but ratings.

As a result, *La Vallée Des Espoirs* ended up on TF1's shelf, where it would spend the next two years. A number of reasons have been given for shelving the series – among them its director's refusal to allow commercial interruptions – but most likely is the suggestion that TF1 did not feel it would give the newly-privatised network the kind of ratings that would prove of interest to its very demanding commercial advertisers.

At the time, a rating of 25 points was considered the minimum that could be promised to advertisers during prime-time. If *La Vallée Des Espoirs* were to be shown, it would have to be in the middle of the night, at 01.00 or 02.00 when audiences are almost non-existent but at least TF1 could fulfill the pledge it had made to the French authorities that a significant percentage of its programming be devoted to original French works.

Shortly after, however, the French TV authority set new guidelines, according to which, films shown in the middle of the night no longer qualified for the quota of "original French programming" and *La Vallée Des Espoirs* stayed on TF1's shelf, with several other mini-series that were made in the pre-privatisation days – when TF1 was as concerned about quality as about ratings.

The series would have remained there, like the others, indefinitely, if it hadn't been for director Marchand's conviction that the mini-series he'd made would have no problems finding a public, if not the all-important commercial advertisers. With the consent of TF1, and its co-producer, Technisonor, Marchand took his film to TF1's main rival, Antenne 2, which scheduled the mini-series for a June 1989 screening in four weekly parts. As Marchand had expected Antenne 2 had no problem finding commercial sponsors for his film.

As if to show that such a series could be shown in prime-time, and stand up to anything TF1 had to offer in the same time-slot, Antenne 2 decided to programme it on Wednesday nights at 20.30 – against TF1's main audience-puller, the variety show *Sacrée Soireé*. At the time of Antenne 2's decision, *Sacrée Soireé* was French TV's most popular programme, with a market share of more than 30 per cent and with a rating approaching 40 points.

Antenne 2, which before TF1's privatisation had become France's most-watched network, saw in its programming of *La Vallée Des Espoirs* an opportunity, not necessarily to attract more viewers than *Sacrée Soireé*, but to demonstrate that works of quality could provide French TV viewers with an alternative source of television programming.

In fact during the four weeks of its broadcast, *La Vallée Des Espoirs* cut into *Sacrée Soireé*'s audience, reducing the variety show's ratings by up to 10 points. It was seen in around three million households by between six and seven million viewers – a rating Antenne 2 had not had regularly in that time-slot for a long time.

It is not known whether Antenne 2 will now choose to follow this success by programming more of the French-made mini-series that have been shelved by TF1 and the country's other commercial channels because of the spectre of low ratings. But TF1 must now regret its decision to not programme a series it had produced itself, especially as *La Vallée Des Espoirs* could have, on another evening, provided the network with the high ratings it needs throughout its broadcast-week. At the same time, such programmes could the kind of quality programming it needs if TF1 is to dispel the lacklustre image with which it has become associated. □

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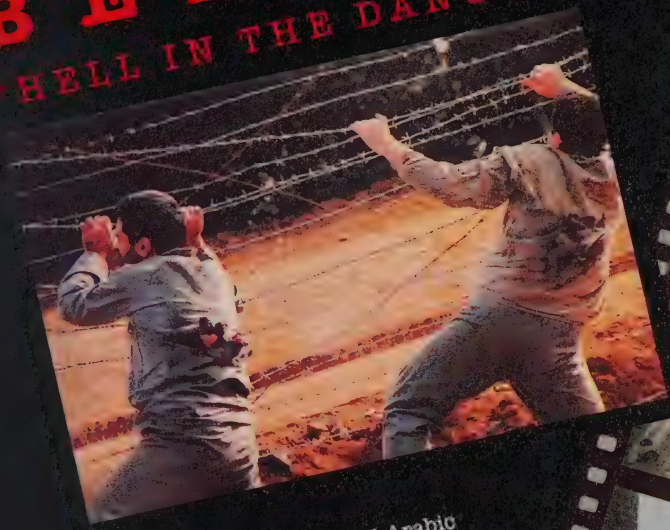

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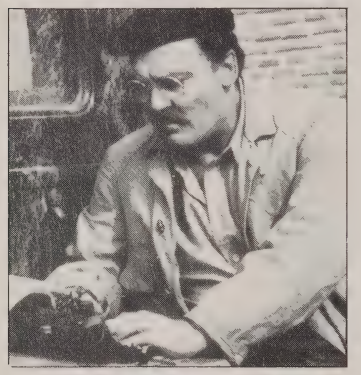

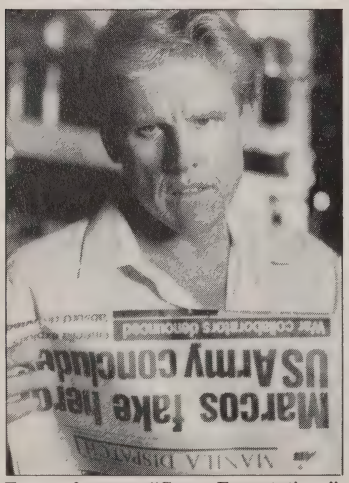

Top to bottom: "Great Expectations"; "Hemingway"; "A Dangerous Life".

Around the World in 80 Days
Pierce Brosnan plays the lead role in Jules Verne's classic adventure story about a 19th century London aristocrat who undertakes a whirlwind journey around the world for a bet with his gentlemen's club.
Produced by Harmony Gold.
NBC 16-18 March 1989. Rating: 13.9 Share: 22.

Favourite Son
A fast-paced thriller about the ambitious press aide of a vice presidential hopeful who conspires to have her boss shot in a staged assassination attempt to further his political career. Harry Hamlin, Robert Loggia and Linda Kozlowski star.
Produced by NBC Productions.
NBC 30 October – 1 November 1988. Rating: 16 Share: 26.

Great Escape II: The Final Chapter
Christopher Reeve, Judd Hirsch and Donald Pleasence pick up where the Great Escape left off in this two-part mini-series. Four former WWII POWs risk their lives to track down the murderers of nearly 50 fellow prisoners.
NBC 6-7 November 1988. Rating: 13.4 Share: 21.

Brotherhood of the Rose
An adaptation of David Morell's novel that traces the lives of two orphans raised by the CIA as brothers then trained to be assassins. Peter Strauss stars in the two-part series.
Produced by NBC Productions.
NBC 22-23 January 1989. Rating: 20.1 Share: 33

Twist of Fate
A German SS engineer undergoes plastic surgery during the last days of WWII and avoids persecution as a war criminal by becoming a prisoner in a concentration camp. But he is sent to the wrong camp and is forced to live with those he once victimised.
Produced by Columbia Pictures.
NBC 8-9 January 1989. Rating: 14.8 Share: 24

From the Dead of Night
A woman miraculously escapes a brush with death only to be haunted later by terrifying encounters.
Produced by Phoenix Entertainment.
NBC 27-28 February 1989. Rating: 14.3 Share: 22

Glory, Glory
An irreverant musical in which a televangelist hires a drug-addicted rock singer to try and revive his flagging ministry.
Produced by Atlantis Films Ltd., Orion Television and Greif-Dore Co.
HBO.

A Dangerous Life
The story of a jouralist who covers the Phillipines revolution that leads to Cory Aquino's election as president.
Produced by McElroy and McElroy Film Accord.
HBO.

Women of Brewster Place
Adaptation of Gloria Naylor's novel about black women surviving life in a block of tenement houses. Stars Oprah Winfrey, Cicely Tyson and Lynn Whitfield.
Produced by Harpo productions and Phoenix Entertainment.
ABC 19-20 March 1989. Rating: 24 Share: 37

War & Rememberance
The sequel to *Winds of War* that traces the lives of a family through WWII. Robert Mitchum, Polly Bergen, Jane Seymour and John Gielgud star.
Produced by ABC Circle Films.
ABC in 11 parts from 13 November 1988 – 14 May 1989. Rating: 17.1 Share: 27

Hemingway
Stacey Keach stars in the lead role in the life story of the writer/adventurer. Also stars Josephine Chaplin, Melissa Berensen and Pamela Reed.
Produced by Daniel Wilson Productions and Alcor Films.
Syndication. Average rating: 12 in top three markets only.

Internal Affairs
A good-cops-bad-cops thriller in which Richard Crenna goes back to his role as New York police detective who solved the murders of two decapitated women in 1985 mini-series *Doubletake*. This time murders take place on different continents and 13 years apart.
Produced by Titus Productions
CBS 6-7 November 1988. Rating: 14.9 Share: 23

Dada is Death
The true story of Barbara Barlow an American housewife whose son is arrested in Malasia on drug charges and sentenced to death. Barlow played by Julie Christie wages a campaign in the world press to shame Malasia into reverting the sentence. She loses her battle.
Produced by Steve Krantz Productions, Roadshow, Coote & Carroll and Samuel Goldwyn Television.
CBS 30-31 October 1988. Rating: 14.9 Share: 23

This is America, Charlie Brown
Charles Schultz's peanuts characters are transported back in time and into the future to live through landmark-events in US

ear in minis

classics to murder mysteries and political intrigue, Kathy Haley reviews the

e last year, giving details of production companies and ratings.

History.
Produced by Lee Mendelson and Bill Melendez
CBS in 8 parts from 21 October 1988 – 23 May 1989. Rating: 9.5 Share: 17

Lonesome Dove
Robert Duvall and Tommy Lee Jones star in this Larry McMurtry story about a pair of aging former Texas Rangers on one last adventure – a 2500 mile cattle-drive from the Rio Grande to Montana. Anjelica Huston also stars.
Produced by Motown Productions, Pangaea Productions and Qintex
CBS 5-8 February 1989. Rating: 26.2 Share: 39

Guts & Glory
David Keith plays Oliver North, from his joining the US Marine Corps to the eve of the Iran-Contra hearings in the USA.
Produced by Mike Robe & Papazian-Hirsch Productions Inc
CBS 30 April & 2 May 1989: Rating: 11.8 Share: 19.6

Passion & Paradise
The unsolved mystery of the murder of Bahamian millionaire Sir Harry Oakes. Catherine Mary Stewart plays Oakes' daughter whose husband is a key suspect.
Produced by Leonard Hill Films Productions, Primedia Productions and Picture Base International
ABC 19 & 21 February 1989. Rating: 12.2 Share: 20

Vanity Fair
Dramatisation of William Makepeace Thackeray's classic.
A BBC Production
A&E Network. Average rating: 0.5

Jane Eyre
Based on the novel by Charlotte Bronte.
A BBC production
A&E Network. Average rating: 0.6

Jennie
The life of Lady Randolph Churchill, mother of Sir Winston.
Produced by Thames Television
A&E Network Average rating: 0.5

Eva Peron
A&E Network. Average rating: 0.7

All Creatures Great and Small
The adventures of a country vet in the north of England. Based on the stories of James Herriot.
Produced by Arts & Entertainment Network and BBC
A&E Network. Average rating: 0.9

Great Expectations
Based on the Charles Dickens novel, this is the story of Pip, a poor boy with a mysterious benefactor. Anthony Hopkins and Jean Simmons star.
Produced by Primetime for HTV and Disney.
Disney Channel 1989

Man who Lived at the Ritz
A wealthy young American is studying art and living at the Ritz in Paris at the outbreak of WWII. When Hitler invades France the young man becomes involved in the French Resistance.
Produced by Harmony Gold, RetteEuropa and SFP
Syndication, Average rating: 6

King of the Olympics
The story of Avery Brundage founder of the modern-day Olympic games whose fight to keep politics and commercialism out of the games made him famous and whose private life made him notorious.
Produced by Harmony Gold RetteEurope and SFP
Syndication. Average rating: 6

Sins of the Fathers
Story of the Deutz family, the driving force behind the formation of the largest chemical complex of pre-WWII Germany. Their technological achievements are eventually abused by Hitler.
Produced by Bavaria Atelier Productions. Taurus Film, FR3, ORF and RAI
Showtime 1989

Code Name Kyril
Spy-Thriller starring Ian Charleson and Denholm Elliot and filmed in Norway, Holland and the UK.
Produced by Incito Productions and HTV
Showtime 1989

I Know My First Name is Steven
The story of a boy coming to terms with being the victim of abduction.
Produced by Warner Bros.
NBC 22-23 May 1989. Rating 24.5 Share 39

■ Syndicated shows may be shown on different dates in different markets and some ratings were unavailable at press-time.

Top to bottom: "Glory, Glory"; "All Creatures Great and Small"; "Vanity Fair".

Hard times

"The Magistrate": impossible without foreign cash.

The truly Australian mini-series may have had its day, as rising costs drive producers overseas in search of finance. Katherine Tullich reports.

THE MINI-SERIES in Australia has, in the past, enjoyed a booming market both at home and abroad, with high domestic ratings and good sales in foreign territories. Last year the mini-series *The Shiralee* was not only the highest rating mini-series of the year but was the highest rating mini in some time, with a 40 peak rating.

But with rising production costs and less money available from networks, the truly "Australian" mini-series per se is under threat. Internationally-oriented mini-series are becoming more dominant as Australian producers are forced to seek international financing.

"A mini-series that would have cost A$2.5 million (US$1.9 million) five years ago would now cost A$8 million (US$6 million)," says producer Hal McElroy, whose production company McElroy and McElroy has produced the mini-series *Return to Eden, The Last Frontier* and *A Dangerous Life*. "We have only one choice. If we want to make an expensive production then we have to make an international production with international appeal. If we want to make something uniquely Australian then we have to make something cheaply. But the tide is running against us."

McElroy says that with all channels facing financial difficulties, they are not buying as many minis and not giving as much pre-sale money to productions. The current ceiling on available money from the networks is A$200,000 to A$300,000 (US$150,000-US$230.000) per hour, while production costs are a minimum of A$1 million (US$760,000 million) per hour – often more. McElroy's six hour mini *A Dangerous life*, for example, cost A$6 million (US$4.6 million).

He predicts an alternative may be long telemovies, three hours in length and shown on one night. He has one in production called *Which Way Home* which has a budget of A$6.5 million (US$4.9 million). "It's just an alternative. It can be billed as a special event to the television audience, which is what mini-series were all about when they started, but these days you need to have a pretty good story to get them to stay home two nights, and gigantic to make them stay over four," he says.

The Film Finance Corporation (FFC) also sees a future in telemovie production in Australia and has stated its desire for more applications. It is committed to spend 40 per-cent of its A$79 million (US$60 million) allocation on TV production, funding mini-series and children's series. Out of 13 applications for minis, 11 were approved. "So far it has been a fairly high approval-rate, but a shift towards telemovies may be more evident in this financial year," said David Pollard, chief executive officer.

While production is leaning towards international co-productions, new content requirements by the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal (ABT) are pushing for more Australian content. This "Australian factor" has been a contentious issue among Australian producers and the Screen Production Association of Australia is forming a working committee in an attempt to force the Tribunal to change its requirements.

For television producers in particular, it presents an anomaly – unable to obtain the required funding from Australian networks, they are forced to consider more international type stories to appeal to overseas markets.

"I'm supportive of the broad principles of the ABT, but I think it is not being realistic or cogniscent of the actual structures of Australian television," says producer Kim Dalton who in collaboration with producer Chris Warner have produced the six hour mini-series *The Magistrate* which is a joint venture between the ABC in Australia, TVS in the UK and Reteitalia in Italy.

"Under the new guidelines if we were producing it for one of the networks it wouldn't score points for Australian content because of its financial arrangements: 70 per cent come from overseas, and it has a foreign actor, Franco Nero, in the lead role," says Dalton.

The Magistrate's storyline has international appeal: an Italian magistrate goes to Australia to search for his son who has gone missing. In the process he gets embroiled in a network of corruption which filters through to the highest levels of government.

Filmed entirely on location in the Australian state of Victoria and in both English and Italian, the A$6 million (US$4.6 million) mini-series will be shown in Australia and the UK in November and Italy next March. It was originally developed by Film Victoria and the SBS multicultural government station. But the project went to the ABC when it became evident that more funding would be required. The ABC provided 30 per cent of the budget in services and facilities.

"A programme like *The Magistrate* will only ever get made if overseas finance is involved," says Dalton. "If the ABT goes ahead with the content guidelines, it will put broadcasters in the position of looking for more low-budget series work to maintain their Australian quota and that could be very serious for the whole industry." □

Australia's top 10 mini-series (1988)

Rank	Programme	Network	Rating
1	(A) The Shiralee	7	40
2	(A) Dirtwater Dynasty	10	33
3	(A) Fields of Fire II	9	28
4	Elvis and Me	10	27
5	Echoes in the Darkness	10	25
6	Spit MacPhee	9	24
	Barlow and Chambers	9	24
7	Noble House	10	22
	Melba	7	22
8	The Murder of Mary Phagan	10	21
9	Blue Grass	10	20
10	Alice in Wonderland	9	19

TV WORLD

MARKET RESEARCH 1989

CRL, one of the top independent market research companies in the UK, in association with Euromar (France), conducted a survey at MIP TV '89 revealing the following results:

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RATINGS

CANADA: TV

Week ending July 16, 1989

Rank	Programme	Viewers 2+
CBC		
1	CBC National News	1,519,000
2	Golden Girls	1,447,000
3	CBC Journal	1,307,000
4	Rock And Roll Mom	1,261,000
5	CBC News: Sun Report	1,232,000
CTV		
1	All Star Baseball	2,206,000
2	Cheers	1,912,000
3	Hands Of A Stranger	1,703,000
4	Cosby Show	1,695,000
5	Different World	1,394,000
Global		
1	Young And The Restless	732,000
2	Growing Pains (Tue)	720,000
3	Who's The Boss	698,000
4	Murder She Wrote	564,000
5	Growing Pains (Wed)	420,000
R-C		
1	Dallas	844,000
2	Le Telejournal	609,000
3	France Revolution	512,000
4	Le Point	489,000
5	Baseball Samedi	437,000
TVA		
1	Mini-Series: Le Fardeau	863,000
2	Fais-Moi Un Dessin	806,000
3	Allo-Cine	793,000
4	Heritiers Du Reve	775,000
5	Mini-Serie: Meprise	729,000

Source: Nielsen

USA: TV

Week ending August 6, 1989

Rank	Programme	Network	Rating	Share
1	Roseanne	ABC	18.8	32
2	The Wonder Years	ABC	16.7	31
3	Who's The Boss	ABC	15.5	30
4	Coach	ABC	15.4	26
4	Cheers	NBC	15.4	28
6	The Golden Girls	NBC	14.9	31
7	Murder She Wrote	CBS	14.6	28
7	Movie: Perry Mason	NBC	14.6	26
9	Designing Women	CBS	14.5	30
9	Empty Nest	NBC	14.5	30
11	Dear John	NBC	14.4	25
12	The Cosby Show	NBC	13.9	28
13	Murphy Brown	CBS	13.8	24
14	Hunter	NBC	13.6	29
15	A Different World	NBC	13.5	26
16	Newhart	CBS	13.4	23
17	60 Minutes	CBS	13.0	28
18	Unsolved Mysteries	NBC	12.2	23
19	Full House	ABC	12.0	27
19	Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow	NBC	12.0	23

Source: Nielsen

FRANCE: TV

Rank	Programme	Viewers	Rating
TF1			
1	La roue de la fortune	15%	25%
2	La roue de la fortune	15%	25%
3	Sos Amitiés	15%	23%
4	La roue de la fortune	15%	24%
5	Deux hommes dans une valise	15%	22%
A2			
1	Soleil Rouge	15%	21%
2	Special Camera Cachee	13%	19%
3	Lamy du soir	12%	17%
4	Jeux Sans Frontieres	11%	15%
5	La storia	11%	17%
FR3			
1	Nais	11%	16%
2	La bataille de la villa fiorita	7%	11%
3	La classe	7%	10%
4	La classe	7%	9%
5	La classe	6%	9%
C+			
1	Top 50	2%	3%
2	Les Superstars De Catch	2%	2%
3	Football: Coupe d' Europe: Auxerre/ Dynamo Zagreb	1%	2%
4	Top 50	1%	2%
5	Top 30	1%	2%
LA5			
1	Ultimax force	6% (8%)	9%
2	China beach	6% (8%)	9%
3	Pourquoi pas nous	6% (8%)	8%
4	Police mannequin	5% (7%)	8%
5	Mort dans la maison des éléphants	5% (6%)	7%
M6			
1	La malédiction du lou	3% (5%)	4%
2	Madame est servie	3% (4%)	4%
3	Madame est servie	3% (4%)	4%
4	Le complot du silence	2% (4%)	4%
5	L'enfant de la misère	2% (4%)	4%

1⅔ = 395.000 Viewers of 6yrs +
1% = 162.000 Households

Source: Mediamat Mediametrie

NEW ZEALAND: TV

July 1989

Rank	Programme	Rating
1	Sale of The Century	48
2	Rugby – NZ vs Argentina	40
3	Rugby NZ vs Argentina	37
4	Rugby – Australia vs Lions	35
5	Network News	32
6	The Flying Doctors	34
7	Holmes	33
7	Rugby – NZ vs Argentina	33
9	Rugby Lions vs Anzacs	32
10	Neighbours	31
11	A Dog Show	26

Average of all viewing data
Source: AGB

UNITED KINGDOM: TV

Week ending August 13 1989

Rank	Programme	Channel	Rating
1	Neighbours	BBC	17.48
2	Neighbours	BBC	16.48
3	Neighbours	BBC	16.21
4	Neighbours	BBC	15.91
5	Coronation Street	ITV	15.73
6	Neighbours	BBC	15.71
7	EastEnders	BBC	15.55
8	Coronation Street	ITV	15.12
9	EastEnders	BBC	14.27
10	The Bill	ITV	12.02
11	The Bill	ITV	11.53
12	Cassandra Crossing	BBC	10.70
13	Casualty	BBC	9.77
14	Home and Away	ITV	9.76
15	Home and Away	ITV	9.67
16	Columbo	BBC	9.50
17	Emmerdale Farm	ITV	9.30
18	The River	BBC	9.28
19	Michael/Night Out	BBC	9.26
20	Joe Longthorne	ITV	9.14

Source: BARB

HONG KONG: TV

July 1989

Rank	Programme	Homes TVR	Individuals
1	Two Of A Kind	61	2271.2
2	Vanguard	62	2277.5
3	Everybody Loves Somebody	67	2198.6
4	News Report	66	1157.8
5	The Joy Of Being Simple	58	2066.8
6	For Once In A Life Time	57	2133.3
7	I Love Amy	59	2108.5
8	Monday Report	57	2175.0
9	A Trial Of Life Time	55	2093.4
10	Film Drama	56	1828.0

Source: AGB

PHILIPPINES: TV

Week ending July 16, 1989

Rank	Programme	Channel	Rating
1	The Real Ghostbusters	2	25.7
2	Guinness Records	2	20.8
3	Tattingers	2	14.9
4	NAM	7	13.6
5	Miami Vice	7	13.5
6	Showtime	9	13.2
7	The Cosby Show	7	11.7
8	21 Jump St	7	11.5
9	Million Dollar Movies	2	11.4
10	Spenser For Hire	7	11.2

Source: AGB Media Pulse

INTERNATIONAL E·V·E·N·T·S

September 12-16	**Moscow, USSR.** 23rd Teleforum – international TV and video market for socialist countries. Telex: 411 140/411 340. Tel: 7 (095) 217 7766.
September 16-19	**Los Angeles, USA.** International Teleproduction Conference and Exhibition. Contact: International Teleproduction Society, 990 Ave. of the Americas, Suite 21E, New York, NY 10036. Tel: (212) 629 3266. Fax: (212) 629 3265.
September 20-October 1	**Perugia, Italy.** 41st Prix Italia. Annual TV conference and awards. Contact: CCE/89 Pool, Consul Convention Bureau, Via Sicilia 11/13/17, 06100 Perugia, Italy. Tel: (075) 72841 5002008. Fax: (075) 35053 5001954. Telex: 662026.
September 20-27	**Bratislava, Czechoslovakia.** Prix Danube: the 10th International Festival of TV Programmes for Children and Youth. Tel: 327 448. Telex: 92277 TVSMD C.
October 2-10	**Valencia, Spain.** 10th Mostra de Valencia; Mediterranean film festival and market. Plaza del Arzobispo 2 Acc. B, 46003 Valencia. Tel: 6-332 15 06. Fax: 6-363 61 11.
October 4-8	**Valencia, Spain.** Merca Film '89. TV and video festival run in conjunction with the Valencia Mostra. Plaze del Arzobispo 2 Acc. B, 46003 Valencia. Tel: 6-332 15 06. Fax: 6-363 61 11.
October 12-16	**Cannes, France.** Mipcom '89. Contact UK: 22 Percy St., London, W1. Tel: (01) 528 0086. Fax: (01) 895 0949. Contact France: 179 Av. Victor Hugo, 75116 Paris. Tel: 33 (1) 45 05 1403. Fax: 33 (1) 47 55 9122.
October 16-21	**Nimes, France.** International Video Danse Grand Prix, '89. TV festival and competition for dance programmes. Contact: Competition Office, IMZ, Video-Danse, Lothringerstrasse 20, A-1030 Vienna, Austria. Tel: (43) 1-72 57 95. Fax: (43) 1-713 83 27. Telex: 753 11 745 IMZ.
October 18--24	**Bristol, UK.** Sci-Tech '89: The Second International Science, Technology and Medical Film and TV Festival. Contact: The Festival Director Sci-Tech, c/o British Gas, 8th Floor, Clifton Heights, Bristol, BS8 1EJ. Tel: (0272) 292656.
November 4-10	**London, UK.** The London Screenings. Hosted by the ITV companies, and housed at Thames TV International and Colour Film Services. Contact: Fenella Henderson. Tel: (01) 228 7459. Fax: (01) 924 2738.
November 15-18	**Munich, Germany.** The Munich International Media Market. A new market for media serving the sectors of information, culture and education. Contact: Eberhard Hauff, Turkenstrasse 93, D-8000 Munich 40. Tel: (089) 38 19 04 17. Fax: (089) 38 19 04 26. Telex: 5 214 674 IMF D
November 20	**New York, USA.** International Emmy Awards. Contact: The International Council, 142 W.57th St. 16th Floor, New York, NY 10019 Tel: (212) 486 6969.
January 16-19, 1990.	**New Oreleans, USA.** NATPE International 27th Annual Programme Conference. Contact: Nick Orfanopoulos. NATPE, 10100 Santa Monica Bvd. Suite 300, Los Angeles, CA 90067. Tel: (213) 282 8801. Fax: (213) 282 0760.
February 11-16, 1990.	**Monte Carlo, Monaco.** International Television Festival of Monte Carlo. Contact: Ms J. Berti. Tel: (33) 93 30 42 27.

While every effort is made to ensure accuracy, TV World cannot be held responsible for errors in this.

O·U·T·T·A·K·E·S

MOST magazines are fairly used to getting the occasional strange press release. They don't come much stranger, however, than the one from MF Advertising, personally addressed to the editor and kindly informing *TV World* about the activities of Thornproof Manufacturing who produce a range of fashion rainwear for men and women. It was accompanied by a request for our features list, so that they will be "fully aware of any articles which may have editorial interest for my client."

So, watch out for articles in *TV World* headlined: "Shower-resistant overcoats – TV's way forward." And "Sou'westers and galoshes in unique joint venture" and so on . . .

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ANN Landers is a famous problem columnist in the US: her down home advice is syndicated across the nation's newspapers.

Consider, then, the trauma that was suffered by the readers who wrote to her complaining that their favourite soap-operas were interrupted with trivial news-flashes about the Tianenmen Square massacre in Peking.

ABC's newsman Peter Jennings interrupted two soaps with special bulletins, which caused one couple to miss "the crisis involving Scorpio, Sean and Frisco in *General Hospital*. They don't rerun the soaps, Ann," they wailed, "If you miss something, it's gone."

Ann Landers declared she had received several similar letters from outraged citizens, and advised: "If you don't want your soaps interrupted by news bulletins, call your local stations and complain."

□□□

Holy editorial restraint! We tried. Really, we did. We have tried *so hard* to keep any mention of Batman out of recent issues of *TV World* because we suspect many of our readers in Europe and America are absolutely sick to death of articles about the movie or the TV series, articles saying how much the writer detests the hype surrounding it all, articles saying how many squillions of dollars have been earned in box office receipts, and articles beginning "Holy-something-or-other."

But then . . . lots of our readers are in Asia, South America, Africa, and untouched by the hype. Holy opportunity!

So here it is: *TV World*'s very own contribution to the publicity machine: the re-released TV original of the *Batman* series (owned by 20th Century Fox TV) is back in syndication in the US and is doing rather well.

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